

June poll far from Major's thoughts

Tories pledge revolution in public services

By NICHOLAS WOOD, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE prime minister last night promised a revolution in the way public services were delivered when he announced plans for a citizens' charter to give consumers the right of redress for shoddy standards.

A white paper detailing rewards and penalties designed to improve services would be published in the summer. "It will be the most comprehensive quality initiative ever launched," John Major told Scottish Conservatives.

"New and tougher standards will be set. We will introduce a wide range of mechanisms to ensure they are met to the citizens' satisfaction. There must no longer be any hiding place for sloppy standards, lame excuses and attitudes that patronise the public."

The whole public sector would be expected to commit itself to the process and the government would be developing the charter programme through the summer. "Make no mistake, I intend it to bite."

And to do so in the interests of pupils, passengers and patients alike," the prime minister told the party conference in Perth.

The charter represents the new brand of Conservatism on which Mr Major plans to base his appeal to the country for a fourth term of Tory rule. It will form the basis of the party's manifesto and marks a subtle break with the Thatcher era.

In place of her zeal for privatising public services, Mr Major aims to achieve the same objective by expanding consumer rights.

At the end of a week of speculation and electioneering, Mr Major mapped out his personal agenda in his keynote speech to the conference, but gave no clue of when he might go to the country. He had earlier sought to damp down the election fever by saying of a possible June poll: "Nothing is further from my mind. Why are people in such a hurry?"

Most members of the cabinet believe that Mr Major will wait until the autumn, and the timing of the citizens' charter white paper to maintain the government's momentum through the summer offers a further hint that he will delay.

The charter will encompass Whitehall, the new Next Steps agencies, local government, public services and nationalised industries. The fresh approach will be modelled on the rights given to customers of newly-privatised industries, who can claim compensation if strict service targets are not met.

In his speech in Perth, Mr Major said the programme would have four main strands:
 □ More competition, privatisation and contracting out;
 □ New approaches to pay and budgeting so that good performance are rewarded and low standards penalised;
 □ A complete review of all mechanisms for helping the public to get the standards they deserve - truly independent inspectors, tough auditing, ombudsmen and effective complaints procedures;
 □ Insistence on the publication of detailed targets for performance and how nearly those targets are achieved.

The government intended to look for ways of direct compensation when standards fell far below what they should be.

be entitled to expect, Mr Major said. When complete, the charter would be the most comprehensive of its kind in Europe.

But the public services union Nalgo dismissed the initiative as a gimmick and a shoddy attempt to disguise the real problems of public services, while Neil Kinnock accused the prime minister of stealing the idea from Labour.

Mr Major was a "Johnny come lately," the Opposition leader told a public meeting in Monmouth in advance of next week's by-election there. "Not only did we make the proposal for our quality commission in the 1987 manifesto, we have been developing our customer contract policies for four years and a growing number of Labour councils are implementing them for local people."

Perhaps the Conservatives were guilty of the politics of envy, he said. "After all, there is no envy greater than the one which leads to the theft of policies."

Mr Kinnock went on to accuse Mr Major of "zealous obedience to the worst excesses of Toryism" as he returned to the attack on the government's health reforms, which he said would be the main issue of an election which he expected and would welcome next month.

But in Perth, the prime minister poured scorn on Labour's promise to finance higher spending on the health service from annual growth of 2.5 per cent. Past Labour governments had never achieved their growth targets and had ended up cutting health spending. "If Mr Kinnock's growth formula had been applied this year, the NHS would have had £500 million less than it has had from us. It must be one of the biggest own goals in British political history."

The only way the Labour could finance £20 billion of extra public spending would be through higher taxation. The cost would be an extra 2p on the basic rate of tax every year for five years, taking it back over 33p in the pound. "It is breath-taking lunacy," Mr Major said. "One thing is clear, Labour have peaked."

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Leading article, page 11

Tornado squadrons go in defence cuts

By MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

THREE RAF Tornado squadrons, Nos 15, 16 and 20, are to be disbanded under the government's Options for Change defence review. Most of the 36 fighter bombers involved will be placed in storage at an RAF base in Wales, but none of the squadron crews will be out of a job.

Some of the Tornado GR1s are already needed to replace seven lost in the Gulf war and one that crashed yesterday near Bremen, in Germany. All three squadrons were represented in the Gulf war.

The announcement by the defence ministry yesterday followed a statement by Tom King, the defence secretary, last July, that two of the four RAF bases in Germany, RAF Wildenrath and RAF Gütersloh, would close and that the number of squadrons would be reduced from 15 to nine.

Apart from the three Tornado squadrons to be disbanded, a fourth, No 2 squadron, will be redeployed from Germany to RAF Marham, in Norfolk. The two Phantom Continued on page 24, col 1

Mistaken identity, page 2



Thinking cap: Vivian Richards, captain of the West Indies cricket team, practising at Lord's yesterday for his last tour of England. Cricket reports, page 38

Lorries to carry speed limiters to enforce law

By NICHOLAS WOOD AND KEVIN EASON

HEAVY lorries up to four years old are to be fitted with speed limiters to restrict them to a maximum 60mph under proposals announced yesterday. The move, a substantial widening of the government's original intentions, will cost the road haulage industry more than £30 million.

Malcolm Rifkind, the transport secretary, said: "We are always very much aware how terrifying it is for many motorists when a huge articulated lorry comes charging down the motorway, breaking the speed limit. If a crash took place the effect would be infinitely more serious than one involving a motor car because of the huge weight and destructive power that these vast lorries represent."

He said that he wanted the limiters fitted not only to all lorries over 7.5 tonnes manufactured after August 1, 1992, but to the 58,000 such trucks under four years old that are already on the roads.

Mr Rifkind, addressing Scottish Tories at their conference in Perth, said he was particularly worried about the danger on motorways, where many lorry drivers continued to ignore the 60mph limit for heavy goods vehicles. "Such disregard for road safety cannot be tolerated. The new measures should significantly reduce both the number and severity of accidents involving lorries."

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speeding HGVs." He added that the environment would benefit from reduced carbon dioxide emissions.

Mr Rifkind's proposals were widely welcomed by lorry operators, who believe that the cost of fitting speed limiters will be recouped within a year by savings on fuel and vehicle wear and tear.

Bryan Colley, director-general of the Road Haulage Association, said: "No one wants to see heavy lorries speeding."

The Freight Transport Association, however, branded the speed limiter scheme unnecessary, unjustified and based on the false premise that it would lead to a significant reduction in motorway accidents, which were mostly caused, it said, by driver error.

In 1989 there were almost

18,000 accidents involving lorries, compared with 325,000 for cars. The rate of accidents per 100 million kilometres covered that year was 60 for lorries against 99 for cars. However, transport department officials have become increasingly worried that when lorries do crash, their bulk and speed can produce devastating consequences.

Governors limiting maximum speed to 70mph have been fitted to coaches made since 1987. Mr Rifkind yesterday would not rule out an extension of the legislation to cover cars, but said there were no plans for it.

The transport department confirmed that the new legislation would not affect foreign lorries, already limited by law to 60mph in Britain.

Granada chief quits

By OUR BUSINESS STAFF

GRANADA yesterday announced the departure of its chief executive, unveiled plans to raise £310 million from shareholders and the sale of its bingo business, estimated a sharp fall in interim profits and almost halved the dividend. Shareholders saw the price fall 27p to 184p.

The buyer for the bingo halls was Bass, which also

announced that it was considering offers for the bookmaker Coral Racing. Bass has appointed Schroders merchant bank to handle the sale.

The Granada cash call dampened the stock market, which was already reeling from another series of profits warnings from industrialists.

Full reports, page 25

Baker embarks on 'last' peace mission

From Richard Buxton in Tel Aviv

JAMES Baker left Washington last night on what administration officials were describing as "one last trip" by the American Secretary of State to determine whether or not Arabs and Israelis will sit down and negotiate. America has made it clear that Mr Baker's latest visit, the fourth to the region since the end of the Gulf war, could be his last unless some progress is achieved in bridging the gaps between Arabs and Israelis.

On Sunday, Mr Baker will meet Alexander Bessmertnykh, the Soviet foreign minister, in Cairo. Mr Bessmertnykh, who yesterday became the highest-ranking Kremlin official ever to visit Israel, told his hosts that Moscow would not pressure Israel or anyone else to the negotiating table.

Speaking at Ben Gurion airport, the Soviet minister did not say when full diplomatic links would be restored between the two countries, nor would he be drawn on outstanding Soviet-Israeli issues. But the tone of his public remarks suggested that he had opened a new chapter in the traditionally strained and hostile relations between the two countries.

Before arriving in Israel, Mr Bessmertnykh had criticised Israel for encouraging Jewish settlements in the occupied territories and even hinted that Moscow might slow down the rate of Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union if Israel did not stop its controversial policy. Yesterday, however, it became clear that he did not even raise the issue with his hosts and instead appeared to have concentrated on bilateral interests, like scientific and agricultural co-operation, touching on the subject of the stalled Middle East peace initiative only in broad terms.

"In our talks there was neither pressure nor threat," said Mr Bessmertnykh, who described the discussions as "friendly". "We have agreed that no country will try to put pressure on any other."

● BERNIE: A meeting to be held in Geneva tomorrow between Mr Bessmertnykh and Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, has been indefinitely postponed, a Swiss government spokesman said.

Realism persists, page 8
Conor Cruise O'Brien, page 10

Teachers 'expect their pupils to fail'

British schoolchildren simply don't want to try harder, according to American experts. David Tyler reports

The British class system is to blame for the inadequate education of most inner-city children, according to a group of American educationists who inspected English schools last year. Teachers let down the majority of their pupils by expecting them to fail, the Americans said.

"Too many students seem to lack aspirations and readily accept the idea of not staying on beyond the age of 16," said Gene Macroff, of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

"The English appear to be resigned to the idea that students will end up at different points (of achievement) and this did not seem at all troubling. The vestiges of a class system still exert an unfortunate effect on the schools." In America, he said, working class students saw schooling as a passport to success and thought higher education a realistic option.

In their report published yesterday the 60 American educationists, who visited some 50 primary and secondary schools in London, Newcastle, Bradford, Kirkcaldy, Liverpool, Bristol, Portsmouth and Southampton in March 1990, approved of the individual attention given to children but said they were surprised at the small amount of traditional classroom teaching.

"Seldom did I see a teacher explain a topic or an assignment," said one American teacher. The group also criticised "excessive" use of child-centred methods which leave pupils to work on their own and questioned the lack of competition in the classroom.

The report, following a visit to the United States in 1988 by Kenneth Baker, then education secretary, said that English schools were often insensitive to questions of race. Continued on page 24, col 3

TODAY IN THE TIMES

PEOPLE



Fay Weldon explains why she spends her weeks in London when she could be having a "gracious and human" time in the country. Page 16

INTERVIEW



David Frost is fun-loving, witty and desperately keen to be liked - so why does he have such an image problem? Saturday Review

HUMOUR



Clement Freud joins the gourmets of Europe in seeking to discover exactly what an international food forum is. Saturday Review

INSIDE

Ulster anger

The declared confidentiality surrounding talks on the future of Northern Ireland has ended with bitter recriminations among the political parties involved. Page 2

Killer jailed

A jilted bride-to-be was sent to prison for life for the murder of a nurse who married her former fiancé. Page 3

Archives offer

Poland will open its wartime archives to British investigators to harden evidence against suspected war criminals in the UK. Page 9

Hackers' threat

Years of sensitive research is at risk from a new wave of attacks on academic and hospital computers which is sweeping Britain. Page 24

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★★★★★



Proud owner: Mr Pettifor and his meteorite

By ALAN HAMILTON

THE first recorded meteor to strike Britain for 26 years has fallen in the back garden of a house in the village of Glatton, near Peterborough, startling the owner and exciting scientists.

Probably originating in the asteroid belt between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter, the blackish, irregular-shaped stony fragment, weighing 1½lb and measuring about 2in by 3in, is being examined by Dr Robert Hutchison of the mineralogy department at the Natural History Museum. Yesterday he confirmed its origin, and is combing the area for other fragments in case the Glatton meteorite is part of a larger lump which broke up as it fell.

Arthur Pettifor, aged 80, a retired civil servant, was tending his flowers shortly after midday on May 5 when he was unexpectedly disturbed by the visitor

from space. "I heard a very loud whistling, whining noise over my head; it was very alarming," Mr Pettifor said. "Then I heard a loud thud, and I saw the top of a conifer tree shaking where it had been hit. I thought that something had dropped from an aeroplane, then I found this black lump of rock under the hedge."

Dr Andrew Graham, of the Natural History Museum, said yesterday that Mr Pettifor's meteorite was probably composed mainly of olivine and other silicate minerals, and could provide information on how and from what the solar system was created. By examining other meteorites, some stony and some of iron, scientists have established the age of the solar system at about 4,500 million years.

Meteorites are a comparative rarity in Britain, only about 20 having been recorded in the past 200 years. The last-

known galactic bombing raid was at Barwell, Leicestershire, in 1965, when a lump of rock weighing 97lb plummeted to earth; fortunately for local residents, it shattered into small pieces well before hitting the ground.

All the giant meteors to hit the earth did so in prehistoric times. One weighing 60 tonnes has been discovered in Namibia, but the largest of all is thought to be the one responsible for a giant crater in Arizona. From the size of the dent, scientists calculate that it must have weighed about 10,000 tonnes, enough to wipe out the entire village of Glatton and much else besides.

Mr Pettifor, now recovered from his Sunday lunchtime shock, said that once the scientists had finished examining the meteorite he would probably donate it to the Natural History Museum. Provided, of course, that they name it after his village.

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Search for truth behind case of mistaken military identity

THE enquiry into the deaths of nine British soldiers, killed in a "friendly fire" incident in the Gulf war, has raised the crucial question: why did the American A10 pilots fail to distinguish between a British Warrior combat vehicle and the Iraqi equivalent, a Soviet-made BMP-1 or BMP-2?

Ostensibly, the two vehicles are very different. The Warrior is much higher off the ground. For the Gulf war, each Warrior also had additional armour strapped to the hull, giving the impression of skirts half-way down the suspension. The Warrior has a single rear door, compared with the BMP's twin doors. But above all, the Warriors had at least three identifica-

tion markings: an inverted black V on the side, fluorescent material fixed to the back of the turret, and a red light on the end of a stalk attached to the back.

However, it appears that the two Warriors attacked by the two A10s were both hit by Maverick missiles, which means that the pilots would not have been able to see what they were hitting.

A10s also weave around as they approach a target at 300mph, only straightening up for a moment as they fire their missiles or cannon.

The enquiry into the deaths of nine British soldiers by 'friendly fire' in the Gulf must address the question of how their vehicles were thought to be Iraqi, writes Michael Evans

ment of Fusiliers, which lost six of the nine soldiers killed in the incident, has stated that the two American A10 aircraft involved "should have been well to the east" of the British units. Lieutenant-Colonel Andrew Larpent,



who will have given his version of the incident to the officer now compiling a report for the Ministry of Defence, spoke about the attack when his battalion was still in Kuwait. "The A10s were in the wrong area. They

shouldn't have been there," he said. According to the American version, as outlined by Lieutenant-General Charles Horner, overall commander of the allied air campaign, the A10s were in that area

because a British forward ground controller had reported it to be clear of friendly forces. Lt-Col Larpent, who spoke to The Times on March 10 in the Kuwaiti desert, said he was commanding a battalion

group, which consisted of the 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers and a complete armoured infantry company. The group was reinforced with soldiers from other regiments.

On the day of the attack, February 26, the battalion was the lead battle group of 4th Armoured Brigade. "We had just taken several thousand prisoners," Lt-Col Larpent said. "We thought it was a message that two Warriors had been hit. We thought it was mines. It was two hours later that someone said it could have been A10s."

The Duke of Norfolk, Colonel-in-Chief of the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, wrote to the families of the six fusiliers who died, to

comfort them. In his letter he passed on the official line at that time, which was that visibility was bad. Since then there have been conflicting reports of the conditions at the time of the incident. Some of the soldiers have claimed that visibility was good.

Yesterday a spokesman for the duke said that as far as was known, the official line was still valid, but if it turned out to be wrong it would be up to the Ministry of Defence to inform the families concerned. "It's possible that the duke will write again to the families," the spokesman said. "You can imagine how he would feel if he had given the families information that was inaccurate."

Gibes flow in Belfast while Brooke tries to save talks

By TIM JONES AND PHILIP WEBSTER

THE declared confidentiality surrounding talks on the future of Northern Ireland ended in bitter recrimination yesterday as the parties appeared to be preparing their supporters for the possible collapse of the initiative.

While leaders of the two unionist parties said that they would not take part in a "continuous process of compromise", Seamus Mallon, deputy leader of the SDLP, accused them of being "like headless chickens".

As argument broke out in Belfast, Peter Brooke, the Northern Ireland secretary, had four hours of talks in London with Gerard Collins, the Irish republic's foreign minister. They discussed obstacles raised during three days of fruitless talks with leaders of the province's four main constitutional parties.

Afterwards, neither minister would comment and there was little clue as to the outcome. With almost two weeks of the ten-week process already wasted, the parties have not even met across the table, arguing instead over the venue of the second phase, involving the Irish government.

Mr Brooke, who has hinted that if the impasse cannot be broken, his initiative may have to be suspended, has confirmed that issues other than that of venues have been raised that could hamper progress. These are understood to include a demand by the unionists for a declaration

of intent by the Irish government to drop its territorial claims to the province, and objections to Mr Collins chairing second-phase talks.

The Rev Ian Paisley, leader of the Democratic Unionist Party, and James Molyneux, leader of the Ulster Unionist Party, yesterday published the proposals they have put to Mr Brooke as "a testimony to our reasonable approach".

The two unionist leaders said: "We cannot continue upon an imbalanced and continuous process of compromise. To do so would be to capitulate, and that we will not do. While we will continue to seek a reasonable accommodation, the community will understand we cannot indefinitely be expected to alter our position in the absence of a reciprocal measure of flexibility by others."

Mr Mallon said: "They are becoming paranoid. They are like headless chickens." He accused the unionists of political ineptitude and weakness.

John Hume, leader of the SDLP, said: "Our position was never that the talks should take place only in Dublin. From the beginning, we understood that since we were going to talk about relations in Northern Ireland and north-south relations and British-Irish relations, the talks should alternate between different venues. We have no objections to alternating the north-south talks between venues in both places."

Mr Hume said that they had been told that the north was not acceptable to the unionists, so they agreed that the talks could alternate between London and Dublin or between any two other venues in Britain or Ireland. He said that Mr Brooke had made proposals, which they had largely accepted, which would mean that the substance of the north-south talks should take place in Northern Ireland.

The two unionist leaders said that they wished the talks to succeed and were concerned that Mr Brooke had been unable to obtain agreement on a venue for the second phase. They are unwilling to travel to Dublin, which they regard as a "hostile" foreign capital that claims their land. They put to Mr Brooke a variety of options, including adopting London for phase two, with all but the final stages of phase three (on the relationship between the United Kingdom and Irish republic) in Dublin.

Over the weekend, negotiations will take place in private before the parties are due to meet again on Monday.

Leading article, page 11

Minister enlists Pop Larkin

By OUR CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

POP Larkin, the tax-evading rogue in the television comedy *The Darling Buds of May*, was called in aid by a minister last night in the continuing attack on Labour's economic plans.

Whether the Inland Revenue or Conservative moralists will be pleased that John Redwood, the trade minister, should have enlisted the help of this particular hero from the novels of H.E. Bates seemed doubtful.

Mr Redwood referred to Neil Kinnock's declaration that there would be no imminent tax cuts under Labour, and said: "It doesn't seem that Mr Kinnock has understood the message in the popularity of *The Darling Buds of May*. His speech promising five years of higher taxes makes grim reading to all those enjoying the sight of a lovable rogue boasting a Rolls-Royce and a well stocked drinks cupboard when most of his fellow countrymen were tuned to the radio, saving up for an old Morris 8 and surviving on mild or bitter."

The minister added: "Whatever the fate the scriptwriters may have in store for Pop Larkin, there can be no doubting that most people think it is important to enjoy a decent and rising standard of living."

Mr Redwood said in a speech in Scarborough that the Inland Revenue had been so worried about the attractions of Pop Larkin's philosophy it had issued a reminder that dodging taxes was a crime. "Conservatives do not support law-breaking but they do understand the popularity of the Larkins and know that lower taxes are the key to personal prosperity and better public services."

The cat's whiskers of musicals celebrates

By SIMON TAIT ARTS CORRESPONDENT

CATS, the West End's longest running musical, which made world reputations for Andrew Lloyd Webber, its creator, and Cameron Mackintosh, its producer, is ten years old tonight.

The success story of the show, based on T.S. Eliot's *Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats*, measures exactly the success of the West End itself. Since the Society of West End Theatres began keeping records in 1981, the business graph of the West End has been an upward curve interrupted only in 1986 when fear of terrorist attacks following the bombing of Libya kept American tourists away from London.

The society's figures for 1990 show the trend has continued. For the first time attendances broke the 11 million mark with an increase of 3.4 per cent to a new record of 11.3 million.

Behind the figures is a growing concern for the future, however. Rupert Rhymes, chairman of the Society of West End Theatre, said: "We will need to do awfully well this summer to make up for January and February."

Cats does not look like flagging, however. It never plays to houses at the New London which are not full and has been seen in most major cities around the world.



Cat and month: Jonathan Dunn, playing Cassandra, makes up before the show

Costa claims fair trial not possible

By DAVID YOUNG

SOLICITORS acting for Charilaos Costa, head of a textiles empire that is being investigated by the fraud squad over an alleged missing £10 million, have said that he would not get a fair trial if he returned to Britain.

Mr Costa, aged 46, who has left his north London home for Cyprus, has claimed that the British authorities have not contacted him or his lawyers. In a statement issued by his solicitors in London yesterday he added that he had not yet decided whether he would return to Britain. The businessman is a friend of Neil Kinnock and opened a firm in his South Wales constituency, Islwyn, last June. He says that it is this friendship that has led to the publicity surrounding his business affairs.

His solicitor said yesterday that because of the newspaper allegations he would not get fair treatment in Britain. Robert Kyriakides, said: "As far as I am aware nobody in authority, whether from the police, the fraud squad, Scotland Yard, Crown Prosecution Service or any receivers appointed to the companies has

contacted Mr Costa to ask him questions, or me to ask me to make him available for questioning. "I would like to make the point that the publicity that has surrounded these events makes it virtually impossible to find a member of the Great British public to sit on a jury who has not been tainted by that publicity."

Meanwhile, Mr Costa's lawyer in Nicosia said Mr Costa was working round-the-clock in Cyprus to inject new life into his companies and was not on the run. Polakis Sarris said that business at his Harymode factory in Nicosia was thriving, with 60 machines making ladies' clothes for European stores.

He added that Mr Costa had recently met representatives in Cyprus from some British banks that he owed money. Mr Kinnock said yesterday that he was astounded when he heard that Mr Costa had encountered financial trouble. He added that he had last spoken to Mr Costa in early January but had been trying to speak to him since because of the jobs that had been lost in his constituency.

Princess meets sex offenders in jail

By RAY CLANCY

THE Princess Royal yesterday chatted with sex offenders and heard how a unique regime at Grendon jail in Buckinghamshire is helping inmates come to terms with their crimes and enabling them to adjust to normal living.

She took part in a question and answer session when she visited the high security jail's acute psychiatric unit where criminals who are serving life sentences for crimes such as rape and murder receive therapy.

Grendon, near Aylesbury, is the only prison in Britain to offer intensive therapy where the system is run along community lines, with inmates freely discussing their problems. The value of such a regime has never been fully assessed since the prison opened in the early 1960s. The Princess Royal, patron of the Butler Trust which gives awards for outstanding work to prison officers, was given an insight into the regime and heard that a study by Oxford University to be published at the end of the year indicates that Grendon could be the way forward for Britain's increasingly violence-wracked

prison system in the 1990s and beyond.

Michael Selby, the governor, said: "We have a feeling that people are listening to us. Perhaps it is time we had another Grendon in the north. The princess had a good grasp of the problems of life in jail but this was a new experience for her."

The prisoners have spoken about the merits of the regime which was praised by Lord Justice Woolf when compiling his report into the recent prison riots in Britain. He said the system ought to be adopted in other jails.



Princess Royal: learns of therapy for sex offenders

BMA accused of unholy alliance with Labour

By JILL SHEARMAN AND NICHOLAS WOOD

WILLIAM Waldegrave, the health secretary, yesterday accused the British Medical Association of jumping on the political bandwagon "in an unholy alliance with Labour".

Speaking at a Tory meeting at Bridgewater, Somerset, on the day after his meeting with the BMA, Mr Waldegrave said the government had no intention of retreating on its reforms and criticised the association for its irresponsible campaign against the new system. "It is a matter for great regret that the BMA has chosen this moment to jettison the more responsible approach it had adopted recently," he said.

"Do they really want to help bring about the election of a Labour government whose prospective prime minister denies them the resources they want even before he reaches the hustings?" Mr Waldegrave asked. "Do they forget that the last Labour government was the only government in the whole history of the NHS to cut spending on the NHS in real terms?"

Michael Forsyth, Scotland's health minister, accused Labour of spreading lies, distortions and misstatements about the health service reforms. Speaking at the Scottish Conservative annual conference in Perth, Mr Forsyth dismissed the Opposition's criticisms as "scapegoating" and mounted a vigorous defence of hospital trusts.

He said that after Neil Kinnock's remarks about future health service funding, the service would not even get more money from a Labour government. "The mendacity of our opponents knows no bounds," Mr Forsyth said.

He said the government was committed to improving and expanding the health service, and the trusts were about delivering that commitment. They would give hospitals the chance to run their own affairs, reduce bureaucracy and back-passing and give more power to local people. However they remained part of the health service.

"Self-governing hospitals are not opting out of the NHS. They will remain an essential part of the service and obtain their funding under contract to health boards. They will be accountable for both the quality of work and the range of treatment undertaken."

Mr Forsyth said the fears raised by Labour and the BMA over the new contract for family doctors introduced last year had proved groundless. With ministers engaged in building bridges with the medical profession, it was notable that Mr Forsyth refrained from criticising the BMA over its role in the dispute.

Heart surgery and kidney transplants could be severely limited because of the cash shortage at Guy's hospital, London, it was disclosed yesterday.

Four killed in tunnel approach

Four men were killed and another was seriously injured when a car collided with a wall yesterday on the A102 Blackwell Tunnel north approach road in east London.

One of the vehicles was reported to have crossed the central reservation on the six lane road. The four men, all in their early twenties, were pronounced dead at the scene. The survivor was taken to London hospital by helicopter ambulance suffering from multiple injuries.

The tunnel was closed in both directions for more than three hours, causing serious disruption in traffic.

Airline gloom

The economic recession and the after-effects of the Gulf war are continuing to affect airlines. British Airways yesterday announced an 11 per cent fall in scheduled passenger traffic during April compared with a year ago. European routes were worst hit with traffic down 16 per cent. Intercontinental traffic was down 9.6 per cent and cargo traffic down 2.6 per cent.

Case dismissed

A charge against Inspector Bob Partridge, aged 44, of stealing a second-hand bicycle worth £50 from the police training college in Taunton, Somerset, was dismissed by Minehead magistrates on a technicality yesterday. Chief Supt Mike Nelson, head of Taunton police, said: "The decision by the Crown Prosecution Service to press ahead with the case has caused distress to all those involved."

Marching orders

Charles Haughey, the Irish prime minister, has ordered special branch detectives off his property after they criticised their lodge-gate accommodation at his north Dublin mansion home as a rickety, leaking hut. Mr Haughey is understood to have told the police authorities that uniformed men were welcome but that he no longer wanted special branch men near his house.

Rail death

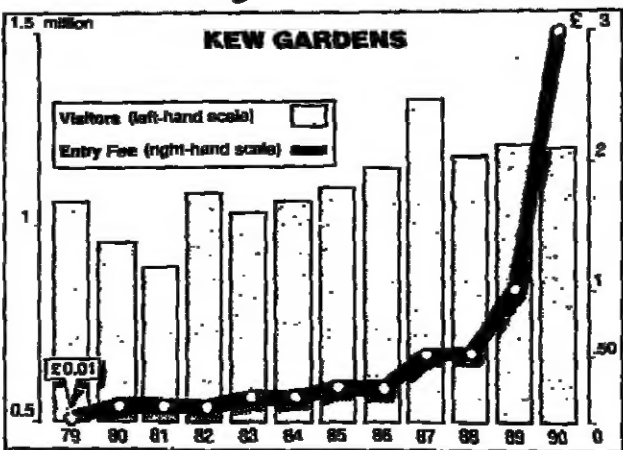
A man aged 18 who was killed when he fell from the door of a train travelling at 90mph near Didcot, Oxfordshire, was yesterday named as John Newton from Sheffield. An enquiry has been launched by British Rail and the Transport Police. The incident is the latest in a series of deaths on the railways, caused when passengers have fallen out of doors.

Self-sufficiency takes root at Kew as subsidies wither

By MICHAEL HORNSBY AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

THE bluebell display at the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew is everything that could be hoped for this year and more. The financial state of the world's oldest and most respected botanical research establishment, which occupies 350 acres and employs 466 people, is not quite so cheering as it struggles to become less dependent on government funding.

Last November Kew, in southwest London, put up its entry fee to £3 from £1, and is hoping to raise £20 million in four years from corporate and individual sponsors. "A lot of research projects simply won't happen if we don't get the funds," John Lavin, head of



administration, said yesterday.

That would have world-wide repercussions. Kew is involved in research and conservation in 59 countries. There are 86,000 types of

plant in the gardens, including 3,000 species that are threatened or extinct in the wild, as well as a collection of more than six million dried specimens, to which 50,000 more are added every year. One of

the more unexpected successes of Kew scientists recently was the isolation of a chemical compound from a species of Australian chestnut tree that inhibits the growth of the AIDS virus. Follow-up work is being funded by the Medical Research Council.

Visitors to Kew have stayed at or above a million a year for the past decade despite a sharp increase in the cost of entry, which was no more than 1p in 1979 (see graph).

Kew ventured from under the wing of the agriculture ministry, still the main source of funds, in 1984, when it acquired its own board of trustees. A new director, Gillian France, was appointed in 1988. Professor France, a world authority on rainforests, had spent 25 years doing the same job at the New

York Botanical Gardens, which relies heavily on public subscription. Professor France was astonished to find there was no "Friends of Kew" organisation. Such a body was launched a year ago, with the aim of attracting 30,000 members in five years, each paying an annual £30, for which they get season tickets, a quarterly magazine and exhibition previews. So far 3,600 have signed up and 63 others have put up £1,000 each to be "founder members".

Another innovation is the Kew Foundation run by Patrick McLoughlin, an experienced international fundraiser. "We have raised £500,000 in the first year, which is not bad considering we were starting from scratch," he said. One of the biggest gifts to

date has come from McDonald's, the hamburger chain, which provided £120,000 for a three-year study of palms in Madagascar. The donation was only slightly marred by environmentalists' protests - false, according to Kew - that meat for the hamburgers comes from cattle reared on land cleared of rainforest.

In 1990-1, the agriculture ministry covered £13.2 million out of total spending of £14.5 million. This year Kew is planning to spend £18.1 million and has asked for a grant of £15.4 million. Projects to be funded include a new visitor's centre, at the Victoria Gate entrance, an extension to the Jodrell laboratory and repairs to the temperate house and the waterlily house.

مركز الأمل

Jilted bride-to-be jailed for killing wife of ex-fiancé

By MICHAEL HORNELL

A JILTED bride-to-be was jailed for life yesterday for the murder of a nurse who married her former fiancé.

Yvonne Sleightholme, aged 38, a doctor's receptionist, was found guilty at Leeds crown court of shooting Jayne Smith, aged 29, with a single bullet through the back of the head with a .22 Winchester rifle seven months after she had married William Smith, a farmer.

Mr Justice Waite said that Sleightholme, who has gone blind since the killing, had tried to frame Mr Smith with a wickedly false story.

Stephen Williamson, QC, for the prosecution, told how Sleightholme was jilted by Mr Smith, aged 36, weeks before they were to be married. The reception had been booked and Sleightholme, of Seamer,

North Yorkshire, had bought her wedding dress. A month after the break-up of their seven-year relationship Jayne Wilford took Sleightholme's place at Mr Smith's Broats Farm, near Malton, and a year later he and the nurse he had known since his schooldays were married.

Mr Williamson said: "There had been planted a heavy resentment and hatred that was finally to result in the killing of Jayne Smith."

Sleightholme, who was still living in the same close-knit farming community, devised an intricate plot to take her revenge on the woman who had won the heart of the man she loved.

She hired a holiday cottage near Kelso in the Borders for a fortnight telling people she wanted to get away from life.

Knowing that her former lover played five-a-side football with friends every Tuesday evening she chose that night for murder. With the rifle she had already taken from her father's gun cabinet, Sleightholme planned to kill Mrs Smith on Tuesday, December 6, 1988. However, the brakes on her car failed and her unwitting victim was given a week's reprieve.

On December 13, Sleightholme drove from Scotland to Broats Farm, where she lay in wait for her unsuspecting rival who had just finished her night shift. She confronted her, marched her across the remote farmyard and fired a bullet into her brain with "deadly accuracy". Afterwards Sleightholme calculatingly ripped off her victim's nurse's uniform and underwear to make it look like a sex killing.

Less than 24 hours later the murderess — described as a "bitter woman scorned" — was making love in her Scottish hideaway with her new boyfriend, Anthony Berry, aged 37, an ambulance driver. When she was interviewed by police the day after William Smith had found his bride's body, Sleightholme faked shock and distress.

Paul Worley, QC, for the defence, accused Mr Smith of being involved in the laundering of drug money in Lithuania, having a homosexual affair and hiring three hitmen to kill his wife because he feared she would take half his £250,000, 1,430-acre farm.

Mr Smith who met Sleightholme at a new year's eve party for Malton rugby

Orkney mother seeks review of child abuse case

By KERRY GILL

LAWYERS acting for an Orkney woman whose eight children are still in care after six months following allegations of sexual abuse are to apply for the case to be reviewed by the islands' reporter to the children's panel.

The lawyers hope that if the reporter, Katherine Kemp, who was reinstated last month after Ian Lang, the Scottish secretary, refused to let the Orkney Islands council dismiss her, hears the case, the mother could get her children back within weeks.

If a review is granted, it will take place before Mrs Kemp, who had been suspended by the council last year. The surprise review move came minutes before the mother was due to appeal to a sheriff for her children's return.

The children, now aged from five to 16, were taken into care last summer, but were returned home on Mrs Kemp's advice before her suspension. After Gordon Sloan was appointed interim reporter, the children were again seized and have since been in care on the mainland.

The islands' social work

department agreed yesterday to search in Orkney and Glasgow for presents sent to the children before Christmas. It emerged that none has been received by the children in spite of a promise that social workers would forward them.

The mother and a friend

said they felt that Mrs Kemp would at last carry out a fair review of the case, which has dragged on for a year.

A review should enable the children to give evidence. In the case of the four Orkney families who had nine children seized in February, none of the children was present at children's panel hearings in which Mr Sloan took part. Sheriff David Kelbie last month criticised social workers and the panel, which had not called the children to hear the allegations as it was obliged to do. Sheriff Kelbie said the nine had been deprived of fundamental rights.

Yesterday, the mother said that she had, accompanied by social workers, been given access to two of her children, aged 13 and 14, this week. "They are physically well, but very confused," she said.



Sleightholme: intricate plot of revenge

club, said the allegations were fictions and lies. He told the court that when his engagement to Yvonne was announced, Jayne visited him and warned him about her. He said: "Jayne was concerned that I was being conned into a relationship that wasn't right for me." He said it was then that she confessed she had always cherished a dream that one day they would get married.

After the verdict, Mr Smith said: "As far as Yvonne is concerned, I feel absolutely nothing for her."



Supporting role: Wingham Great Barn, in Norfolk, singled out by the Prince of Wales last year as a disgraceful example of rural neglect, which is to be restored at a cost of £430,000 by Norfolk county council with the help of a £172,000 grant from English Heritage. Work will begin this summer. Re-chatching will cost £70,000. The grade I barn dates from about 1570



Last gasp: Derreck Williams, a trader, enjoys a vaudeville cigar on the final day of business at Spitalfields before the market moves to Leyton

Market looks east for a fruitful future

By ROBIN YOUNG

THEY are ripping the living heart out of Jack the Ripper's London this weekend. Spitalfields fruit and vegetable market, which had occupied its site on the eastern boundary of the City of London since 1682, had its last day's trading yesterday.

Over the weekend, it will be moved east, stock and banana four miles east, and the surrounding streets, where Jack gutted six victims, will experience a tranquillity not known

in living memory. At 3am on Monday, 100 tenant companies and 1,000 market employees will begin business in a new £60 million complex on Hackney Marshes, at Leyton, east London.

"You have to feel a bit sad on a day like this," said Arthur Hutchinson, chairman of the tenants' association, who has negotiated the market's move over the past six years. "I have worked here 46 years, and my father was actually born on this market site. But I would like to think that the

move will help our market to continue to grow and prosper. If it doesn't, you may see the first public execution since Tyburn out on Hackney Marshes, and it will be my neck in the noose."

Alf Hayes, chairman of the Spitalfields branch of the Transport and General Workers' Union, said: "It is a sad and emotional time." However, Mr Hayes, who started as an "empty boy" (an apprentice porter) 40 years ago, added: "The old market is antiquated. It dates from

the age of the horse and cart. For years, the porters have had to cope with incredible congestion in the surrounding streets, and had to make do as best they could with nowhere to park."

Michael Culverwell, principal assistant to the market superintendent, said: "The old market's Horner building was built in 1887, when it was all bushel boxes, baskets and barrows. It wasn't meant for fork-lift trucks and container lorries, so no one doubts we had to go."

Water firm fined for tunnel deaths

THAMES Water Authority and a tunnelling company were fined a total of £30,000 yesterday after two workers died in a water main.

Clive Walker, aged 25, an engineer, and James McCotter, aged 21, a student, collapsed and died from lack of oxygen during an inspection of the London water ring main works at Stoke Newington, north London, in 1988. Mr McCotter, who died trying to rescue Mr Walker, was commended by the judge for a brave deed.

Mr Walker had collapsed in a narrow pipe while trying to inspect valves. Mr McCotter tied a rope around his waist before being lowered into the pipe to try to revive him. However, he, too, collapsed in air where the oxygen level

might have been less than half that of normal. Snaresbrook crown court, east London, was told. Judge Halman said: "He took what precautions he could; he was not foolhardy. But they proved inadequate and he lost his life." Mr McCotter, a microbiology graduate, had worked at his laboratory in Rotherham, South Yorkshire, for only 12 days.

Peter Rook, QC, prosecuting for the Health and Safety Executive, said: "It would appear that little or no thought was given by Thames Water Authority to how the tests on the pipe should be carried out and little or no thought was given by Davy of safety in the shaft. Many workmen must have been put at risk."

James Guthrie, for Thames Water, said: "My clients regarded Mr Walker's actions as uncharacteristic. He was regarded as sensible and safety conscious. It appears he did not appreciate the risk."

Thames Water and Davy Mining pleaded guilty to two counts each of failing to ensure the safety of the men. Judge Halman criticised both companies for gross inadequacies in their safety regimes. He said that the financial penalties must reflect the disquiet of the public at such a horrific event.

Thames Water was fined £10,000 on each count and ordered to pay £4,200 costs. Davy Mining was fined £5,000 on each count with £2,078 costs. The companies said that they had improved training and safety standards since the accident.

Video captured baby attack

A MOTHER-of-three was captured on video suffocating her baby boy in his hospital cot, a court heard yesterday.

Nurses watched in horror as the 25-year-old housewife pulled the bed covers over the baby's face as he struggled violently for breath.

Police and health chiefs decided to trap the woman after doctors became suspicious when she kept bringing in the three-month-old child with a variety of problems, it was said.

They launched a covert surveillance operation after admitting the pair into the Royal Brompton National Heart hospital in Chelsea, west London. Hours later the woman was caught red-handed smothering the baby,

with sheets and by pressing downwards, Middlessex Guildhall crown court was told.

The woman, who cannot be named to protect her baby's identity, admitted cruelty to a child on September 3 last year.

The court was told that doctors had repeatedly treated the boy for breathing difficulties before the attacks were witnessed on film.

Mr Jeremy Domes, for the prosecution, said that eventually the boy was given extensive mouth-to-mouth resuscitation at the hospital last August. He said: "It was clear that manual suffocation from an outside organisation had taken place and suspicion clearly fell on the defendant."

The child was admitted to the hospital on September 3

and the joint surveillance operation was mounted by police and local authorities.

When arrested the woman said: "I don't believe it" and claimed that she had no recollection of the attacks. She has moved out of the family home in Gillingham, Kent, and now lives in nearby Chatham. Mr Domes said there was no evidence to suggest the victim had suffered any brain damage although his movements had "slowed down".

Judge McLean adjourned the hearing for four weeks for medical and social enquiry reports after Mr Nicholas Lorraine-Smith, for the defence, said that the woman suffered from bouts of hysteria.

£3.5m for recovery of film industry

By SIMON TAIT, ARTS CORRESPONDENT

A NATIONAL film commission has been created to guide the recovery of the British film industry, it was disclosed yesterday.

Sydney Samuelson, chairman of the British Academy of Film and Television Arts management board, is to be the first commissioner. His job will be to attract film

makers to Britain by offering locations, logistical support and technical expertise, which he will co-ordinate.

In a written reply, Lord Heselgrave, the trade and industry minister responsible for films, told Parliament that a £3.5 million grant over four years was to be made to set up and run the commission. Simon Perry, director of British Screen Finance, welcomed the move, but said that the emphasis needed to be on encouraging the appropriate skills and attracting back British film makers and technicians from abroad.

Mark Fisher, Labour's arts spokesman, dismissed the government's action as inadequate and a missed opportunity. "What we need is not simply location facilities but a new tax regime to attract investment," he said.



Supporting role: Wingham Great Barn, in Norfolk, singled out by the Prince of Wales last year as a disgraceful example of rural neglect, which is to be restored at a cost of £430,000 by Norfolk county council with the help of a £172,000 grant from English Heritage. Work will begin this summer. Re-chatching will cost £70,000. The grade I barn dates from about 1570

'Naff' Neasden has the last laugh

By JOE JOSEPH

Why are we all beastly to Neasden?
Just because it lacks spires and domes?
Or is it the curse of John Benjamin,
Who christened it Home of the Gnome

MOST people come across Neasden either when they are travelling from east to west across London, or from south to north. Most of them just keep travelling.

If they find a way of unclenching themselves from the traffic to stop, say at Neasden Parade, and breathe in the interwar air of Metroland, it is only to see if the people and places chronicled in the pages of *Private Eye* do indeed exist. To see if there really is a Sid and Doris Bonkers in the Neasden telephone directory. Or to pinpoint Tesco Road. Or, if their luck is in, to spot the ashen-faced and tight-lipped Ron Kneeb, manager of the legendary Neasden Football Club, perhaps giving a few tips to Neasden FC's bungling own-goal-

scorer Pevsner. Now, after 30 years of making it on the chin, London NW10 is fighting back. Staff at Neasden's local Grange Museum — probably the only museum in the world sited in the middle of a roundabout ringed by five lanes of traffic — have chatted to local residents, some of whom still remember it as a farming hamlet, and put together an exhibition celebrating London's most maligned suburb.

The museum's curator, Finbarr Whooley, revels in Neasden's notoriety. It has saved Neasden from becoming just another anonymous London outpost. He has put flying ducks on the museum's walls. And he has bought a plastic gnome. In the "Naff Neasden" section there is a page from *Private Eye*, a 1982 Sloane Ranger spoof called *The Neasden Rangers Handbook*. The social climber's guide advised Neasden parents on the most chic names for their offspring: Sid and Doris.

"I've invited *Private Eye* to Monday's private view," Mr Whooley said yesterday. "We'll see if they turn up." Why does everyone laugh at Neasden,

Mr Whooley? Why does no town want to be twinned with Neasden? Why did Spike Milligan claim he was a victim of a Turkish earthquake disaster in Neasden because a United Nations food parcel, dropped from a helicopter, fell through his roof and hit him? Why did Peter Cook and Dudley Moore think it such a lark to do a skit on the making of *Anne Of A Thousand Neasdens*?

"Wigan was once a national joke, too," says Mr Whooley. "It must have something to do with the fact that Neasden was the epitome of Metroland, it was somewhere out of London, it was very suburban. Neasden is a funny name. But in the end it was down to very funny people doing a good hatchet job on it and keeping up the campaign. *Private Eye* have done a very good job on leg-pulling Neasden for a long time. We keep a section in our library on Neasden humour, so we're avid readers of *Private Eye*."

Does he get fed up with the jokes? "Oh no, it's great publicity for us. I hope *Private Eye* continues." They will, Mr Whooley, they will.

THE SUNDAY TIMES KILL THE MESSENGER

by Bernard Ingham



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HIV transfusion victims launch payment claims

By THOMSON PRENTICE, MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE government faces a host of new claims for swift compensation from health service patients who were infected with the Aids virus by contaminated blood transfusions.

A campaign for the patients, including road accident victims and women who needed transfusions during childbirth, is being launched now that £42 million of compensation payments have been agreed for 1,200 HIV-infected haemophiliacs.

About 170 transfusion patients are thought to be infected, but the government denies that they have any right to a similar claim. Lawyers for some of them have formed an action group and will urge William Waldegrave, the health secretary, to give equivalent compensation.

The lawyers have been holding fire until the haemophiliacs' cases were resolved. Payments totalling £1.5 million for 34 infected haemophiliac children, and 13 infants whose infected parent or guardian has died, were ap-

proved by the High Court on Thursday. Graham Ross, a Merseyside solicitor, has formed the Transfusion Aids Solution Group with lawyers representing 14 patients in the North. Others are expected to join. "The government has compensated the haemophiliacs as an act of compassion. I cannot see why that well of compassion should suddenly run dry for transfusion patients whose tragedies are equally real," Mr Ross said.

He said that he had helped to instigate legal action on behalf of the haemophiliacs four years ago. Since then a number of those patients had died. "It is a matter of great regret that the government did not see fit to show compassion four years ago. These are men, women and children who are dying because they were given infected blood. Time is not on their side." They were the unlucky few among millions of people who received transfusions during the early and mid-1980s before blood donations were routinely

screened, he said. David Watters, general secretary of the Haemophilia Society, said: "We sympathise with these individuals. We are unable to campaign on their behalf but we are deeply concerned. A change in the laws on compensation for medical accidents is needed urgently."

By the end of last year, 138 people were known to be HIV-positive as a result of transfusions, and 30 others had developed Aids, of whom 22 have died. Because some cases are not reported, the number infected is seen as an underestimate. Others may not know they are infected because of the virus's long latency.

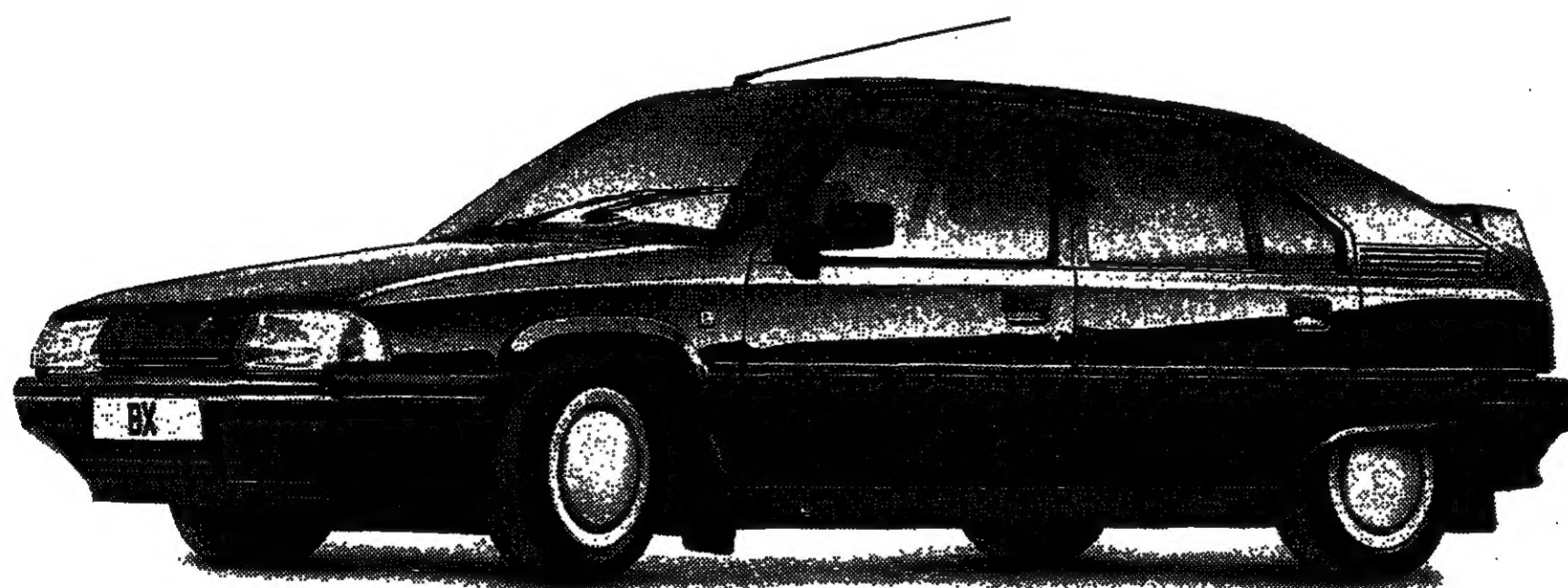
The government says that the patients do not fall into the same category as the haemophiliacs because they did not have a life-long, hereditary condition when they received contaminated transfusions and were less likely to have the weakened immune systems that result from the use of blood-clotting agents in the treatment of haemophilia.



Family trees: the palm room, one of nine state rooms in Spencer House in St James's. The house, the former London residence of the Spencer family and one of the finest examples of an 18th century town house, has been restored and opens to the public for the first time tomorrow

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National courts plan attacked by Donaldson

By FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

RADICAL Home Office proposals for a national magistrates' courts service run and centrally funded by a government agency were severely criticised yesterday by the Master of the Rolls, Lord Donaldson of Lynton. He described aspects of the proposals as "constitutionally objectionable".

He told justices' clerks at their annual conference in Cardiff that any radical reform of the magistrates' courts service should include transferring it from Home Office control to the Lord Chancellor's department.

In a timely speech, delivered when the Home Office proposals are under consideration in Whitehall, Lord Donaldson said that a centrally run service could mean loss of judicial independence. "In my view that would be too high a price to pay."

He said that it was fundamental to the administration of justice that magistrates and judges should administer the law as laid down by Parliament, not by the executive. To give the home secretary, who was responsible for law and order, responsibility for the administration of justice must expose him to the temptation "to guide the justices and their clerks into what he would regard as the paths of righteousness".

Lord Donaldson said that the Lord Chancellor was in a different position because he was both minister and judge.

His department was already responsible for the higher courts service, criminal and civil. "If he also had responsibility for a national magistrates' courts service it would be easier to share resources, such as courtrooms, and would eliminate lack of inter-departmental co-operation."

Lord Donaldson's remarks will fuel a debate on the timing and content of the government's response to the Home Office proposals. The Treasury is believed to be anxious to secure greater accountability over the service, while the Lord Chancellor's department favours bringing the service under its wing and believes that that should be part of the government's response.

Lord Donaldson also criticised the idea that magistrates should be elected rather than appointed.



Donaldson: defending judicial independence

Price cuts on winter holidays

By HARVEY ELLIOTT
AIR CORRESPONDENT

THOUSANDS more people than originally predicted are expected to take a winter holiday this year as tour companies drive down the cost of a package to resorts desperate to revive their flagging tourist industry.

Thomson Holidays, Britain's biggest tour operator, yesterday began issuing 10 winter brochures offering about one million holidays in total, with prices, on average, only 1 per cent up on last year, and many with substantial reductions.

Charles Newbold, Thomson's managing director, said: "Hoteliers throughout the world are offering some of the best deals we've ever seen to win back the business they lost because of the Gulf war." The war is estimated to have cost his company more than £10 million, mainly in lost business. The collapse of the holiday group ILG and the gradual improvement in bookings will, it is thought, have wiped out this loss by the end of the winter season.

One of the main targets for tour operators this winter will be the over-55s, many of whom cancelled any holiday plans they may have had last year and instead invested their spare cash at a time when interest rates were high.

No action over fatal rail crash

No prosecutions will be brought over the rail crash at Cannon Street station, London, that killed two people and injured more than 250. Sir Allan Green, QC, director of public prosecutions, has decided there is not enough evidence to prosecute the driver or any other person or organisation.

Morris Graham, aged 24, the driver, said brakes failed before his train hit buffers on January 8, but British Rail ruled out brake failure. An enquiry was told that transport police failed to prove evidence of control positions.

Parents settle

Tommy Maby and Diane Dignam have received damages, thought to be a five-figure sum, from Leeds social services, for the murder of their son, Gavin Maby, aged two, by his foster father.

Hot money

Police have put out an alert for a stolen, stained banknote after safe-breakers using a welding torch set £5,000 alight in a grocer's at Clenchwarton, Norfolk, and used 20 bottles of Coca-Cola to put it out.

Pilot ditches

A Royal Navy pilot escaped with minor injuries yesterday after ejecting from his Sea Harrier jet, which crashed in countryside during training near Chepstow, Gwent.

مكتبة الامم

Kinnock lifts by-election stakes with health plea

By PHILIP WEBSTER, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

NEIL Kinnock last night raised the stakes in Thursday's Monmouth by-election by warning voters that a Tory victory would be portrayed by the government as backing for its health service reforms.

The Labour leader used an election rally in the constituency to renew his assault on the NHS internal market and to underline Labour's commitment to putting public service improvements ahead of tax cuts. He said: "The basis of modern Toryism - whether it is Thatcherite, Majorite or just hypocrite - is, if there is no market, there is no care."

Mr Kinnock added: "Such is the state of the basic public and personal services in Britain now, that the needs of the children and pensioners and sick of our country must come before any tax reductions. They must keep on coming first for years to come."

The health service has become Labour's main campaigning issue since the government's decision to abolish the poll tax.

Last night, Mr Kinnock said that queue-jumping had become the order of the day in the Tory NHS. The Conservatives said that they wanted better public services and were committed to the NHS, and then that they were going to chop taxes. It did not add up.

"They can have a merciful health service or they can have a market health service - but they can't have both," he said.

Physicians, nurses and patients knew that the health service could not be run like chain stores. "A health service deals with people - people in pain and anxiety," Mr Kinnock said. "They are not clients to be shuffled through the check-out."

A market always had second choices, but no one was willing to accept second-best health care. Yet that was the prospect when a health service was divided by contract. "It is the unavoidable result of a system built on the idea that clinical treatment can be bought and sold as if it was a motor car or a hair-do, or a ticket to the cinema," he said.

Mr Kinnock said that all the opt-outs lacked a democratic mandate. The by-election was a chance for people to say whether they wanted opt-out. Everyone should know that if the Conservative candidate won, ministers would represent it as "an endorsement of opt-out, a vindication of the health market, the two-tier system, the competitive contracts". He added: "It would be misrepresentation on a gigantic scale. But that would not stop the government claiming support."

Labour's choice was not to put up the taxes of ordinary people, who were paying enough, but to put up the taxes of those who could best afford it. Its choice was to use all available revenue to strengthen essential public services, such as health and education, not to dissipate resources on high-rate tax cuts.

Opinion poll helps campaign for PR

By OUR CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

LABOUR's electoral reform campaigners were given a lift last night by an opinion poll showing that the party could improve its general election chances by supporting proportional representation.

A poll conducted by Mori for the Electoral Reform Society indicated that Labour support for proportional representation would swing key groups of voters behind the party, reversing a 2 per cent deficit to the Tories into a 1 per cent lead.

Labour's working party on electoral reform is preparing to draw up a report for the party's September conference. It is looking at systems for the Scottish and European parliaments, regional assemblies, a second elected chamber, and the Commons. Pressure for reform has been growing and Neil Kinnock, the Labour leader, has been careful to leave open the door.

According to the poll, Labour could expect a 4.5 per cent swing in the South and 2 per cent in the Midlands. In Greater London it might have a 4.5 per cent swing. The poll also indicated that a Labour manifesto commitment would attract one in five of Liberal Democrat supporters. Robin Cook, shadow health secretary, said: "This shows Labour should regard electoral reform not as a threat but as its opportunity."

Mori conducted the survey between April 19 and 22 among 1,992 adults at 150 constituency sampling points.

Streetwise Tebbit shrugs off flak on the hustings

By RICHARD FORD, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

IN COBBLED Agincourt Square, birthplace of Henry V as Monmouth's tourist office is quick to remind visitors, a group of elderly Tory women looked less than enamoured as the rotund figure of Roger Evans emerged from a pale blue van.

They had been waiting impatiently for Norman Tebbit to arrive to take part in one of the many rituals of by-election campaigning - the lunchtime walkabout followed by a brief sojourn for refreshment in a local pub.

The party organisers had done their work. Around the square were a number of women who clearly enjoy shopping with large blue rosettes pinned to their coats. Others appeared entranced by the diamonds in a nearby jeweller's but showed their true colours when squeals of "Here he is, here he is" alerted them to the arrival of Mr Tebbit. He headed for the first photocall of the day.

That has effectively become the object of the walkabout, as the candidate is surrounded by the media and party workers who sweep ahead to find voters who are already supporters. So first Mr Evans, the Conservative candidate, joined Mr Tebbit for a photocall outside the Shire Hall where in 1839 Chartist leaders had been tried after riots in nearby Newport.

Unfortunately for the Tories, one of the first to greet the former party chairman was a Liberal Democrat supporter. In the best traditions of electioneering it looked as if she had been planted in the crowd to provide maximum embarrassment to the Tories. Ellen Goodrich told Mr Tebbit that eight years ago she had been a

Conservative councillor in Canterbury. Until eight weeks ago, she had been a Tory but now she was a Liberal Democrat. Mrs Goodrich then launched into a denunciation of the government's economic policies which, she said, were destroying businesses. Mr Tebbit reminded her of the Lib-Lab pact which helped keep James Callaghan in power at the head of a government that had done more damage to business than any previous government.

After this, the Tories encountered few difficulties as they moved down Monnow Street. Mr Tebbit barely blinked as he was reminded of the government's economic difficulties when Nigel Cass, a chartered accountant, said: "There is a lot of good business in insolvency."

While the ousting of Margaret Thatcher has produced a mixed reaction among the Conservative faithful with many unhappy at her removal from the leadership, John Major excites little feeling on the doorstep.

However, the recession is causing concern and is exercising thoughts of farmers, who are a mainstay of the local economy. Labour posters have even been spotted in a few fields in the Wye and Usk valleys. Asked whether the Tories could rely on his support, a dairy farmer told Mr Evans: "I suppose so." It was a less than wholehearted endorsement and something about which the Tories must be worried.

General election 1987: John Stradling Thomas, (Con) 22,387; K Cass (Lib) 13,057; C Lloddy (SDP/All) 11,131; S Merddudd (Pl Cymru) 363. Con maj: 9,350

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Joyful reunion: a surprise meeting yesterday for Barbara Morris whom Neil Kinnock last saw 27 years ago at the Tredegar young socialist club in Mid Glamorgan. The Labour leader spotted

Miss Morris, now a nurse, on a visit to Neville Hall hospital, Abergavenny, Gwent, ran towards her and gave her a big hug. She said later: "We used to go to all the meetings together and to

dances. He was always very charming and very funny. I always knew then that Neil was destined for great things. He hasn't changed that much - except of course now he's bald."

King fails to dispel doubt on naval base

By NICHOLAS WOOD, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE fate of the Rosyth naval base was in the balance last night after Tom King said that no decision has yet been taken about its possible closure.

The defence secretary's remarks to Scottish Tories at their conference in Perth came after he was pressed by speakers to save the base and more than 3,000 jobs. Mr King's failure to end the uncertainty surrounding the future of the east coast base will come as a disappointment to many Scots, including many in the Tory party.

Mr King said that it would be "grossly irresponsible" of him not to review Forsyth's future in the light of the need to balance spending against the reduced threat from the ending of the cold war. "If I am to get the resources that we need for our troops I have to make clear that we are operating our defences in an effective and economical way."

Labour has saddled itself with an electoral albatross by promising to freeze roads spending at present levels. Malcolm Rifkind, transport secretary, told the conference.

Badger bill receives Commons support

A private member's bill to take firm action against badger baiters by making it an offence to interfere with a set won the support of the Commons yesterday after its sponsor made a concession to the farming lobby.

Roy Hughes, Labour MP for Newport East, agreed to alter his bill so that dogs could be allowed into sets on licence, for example to search for a fox that had sought refuge in a set after killing farm livestock.

Zoo talks set

The directors of London Zoo, which faces closure in September unless it receives government aid, are to discuss its future with David Trippier, the environment minister, next week. The meeting follows talks with environment department officials on converting the zoo to an environmental education centre.

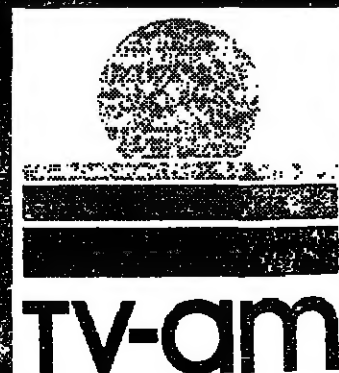
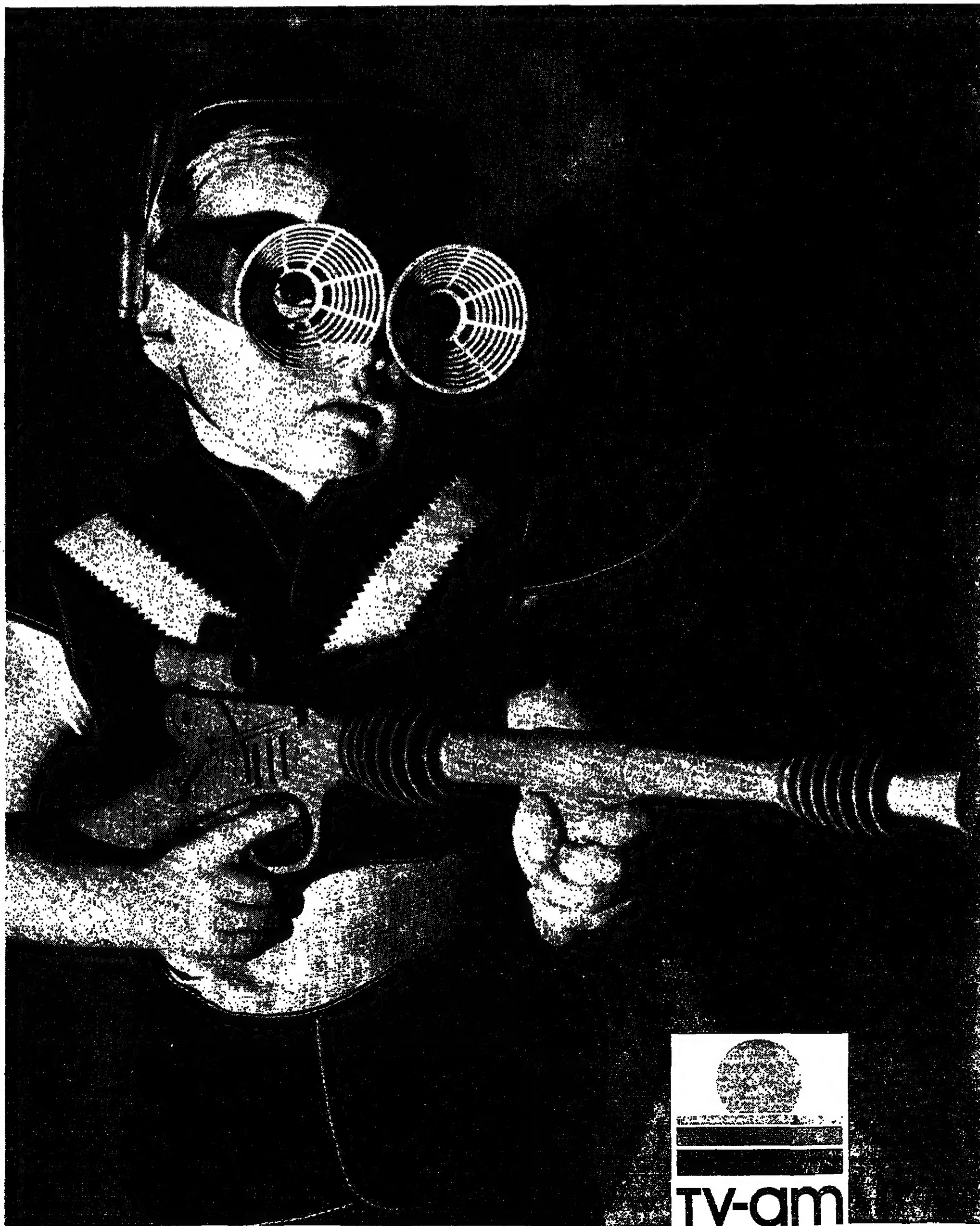
MP to bow out

Mike Woodcock, Tory MP for Ellesmere Port and Neston since 1983, said yesterday that he will not stand at the next general election. Mr Woodcock, aged 48, said he wanted to spend more time with his family and on business interests. He has a 1,853 majority.

Future imperfect? 3R's which aren't? Teachers who can't? Schools opting out?

Whitehall opting out? Standards slipping? Anger rising? How can you be sure your

child's future is in safe hands? Discuss. TV-am's CLASS OF '91. 13th-17th MAY AT 8.10 AM.



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£120,000-£199,999	12.25%	13.00%

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 **Nationwide**
The Nation's Building Society

The APRs indicated show how much endowment loans of £40,000 on a property costing £60,000 (Mortgage Application Fee of £25 and Legal Fees of £38) Monthly Payment £231.78, TAP £162,968, of £60,000 on a property costing £80,000 (Mortgage Application Fee of £43 and Legal Fees of £110) Monthly Payment £234.07, TAP £236,837, and of £120,000 on a property costing £150,000 (Mortgage Application Fee of £175 and Legal Fees of £115) Monthly Payment £1054.69, TAP £458,430 respectively would cost. All interest charges, repayment of capital, Legal Fees as above (assuming the same Solicitor acts for both the Society and the Borrower), Mortgage Application fees (as above) and Redemption Fees of £25 are included in the examples. Typically, a couple (male and female, both aged 25 and non-smokers), over a 25 year period (360 premiums) taking out a £40,000 endowment mortgage would pay a monthly premium of £58. The figures assume that the mortgage rates shown will not change. On a 25 year mortgage a borrower would make 360 monthly payments. All mortgages are subject to confirmation of your status and valuation of the property. Security over your property and in some cases over a suitable life policy will be required. For loans exceeding 75% an additional mortgage guarantee premium may be required. Mortgage loans are not available to persons under the age of 18. You must arrange your buildings or contents insurance through Nationwide and pay your monthly mortgage payment by direct debit or by automatic transfer from your FlexAccount to obtain the large loan rates. Written quotations available upon request from Claire Adams, Nationwide Anglia Building Society, Chestersfield House, Bloomsbury Way, London WC1V 6PW.

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مكتبة الامم

ANC allows more time to break Zulu weapons deadlock

FROM GAVIN BELL IN JOHANNESBURG

THE African National Congress has extended by one week its deadline for suspending negotiations with the government, following inconclusive discussions on the crucial issue of Zulus bearing "cultural" weapons in townships.

An ANC source said yesterday that the organisation was resolved to break off talks if Zulu supporters of the rival Inkatha Freedom party continued brandishing spears and clubs in public as part of their traditional regalia. After a refusal by Mangosuthu Buthelezi, the Inkatha leader, to disarm his followers, President de Klerk said on Thursday that spears and other "cultural" accoutrements were excluded from a ban on weapons in the townships.

In an attempt to reach a compromise, Mr de Klerk said the government would act against any "misuse" of cultural weapons and was seeking an acceptable definition of what constituted a cultural event. Such a formula places the security forces in an unenviable position — they are now duty-bound to divest a man of an axe, but not of a spear unless he tries to kill somebody with it. In the charged atmosphere of the

townships, such orders are impossible to enforce. The ANC is insisting on the prohibition of all weapons in public. The source said that the ANC was still demanding the dismissal of General Magnus Malan, the defence minister, said Adriaan Vlok, the minister of law and order. If agreement was reached on Zulu weapons, the ANC was ready to discuss its other requirements. "There is no question of continuing negotiations if the government does not meet all our demands," the source said.

The organisation was still opposed to a peace conference planned by the government later this month, believing that such an assembly should be convened under neutral auspices. The source said Mr de Klerk had not consulted Nelson Mandela, the deputy president of the ANC, on the initiative, and had informed him of it shortly before the initiative was announced. He said relations between the two leaders had been strained by the conflict, but Mr Mandela still regarded Mr de Klerk as a man of integrity who had no "hidden agenda". The problem was elements in Mr de Klerk's National party and the state security apparatus whom

the ANC believed were trying to destroy it.

The source was optimistic that the deadlock could be broken, but he said any breakdown in negotiations would trigger mass protest by the ANC and its allies. Mr de Klerk is expected to go back to Chief Buthelezi, but the Zulu leader has shown no willingness to curtail his followers' "cultural" activities.

Yesterday a white intruder was shot dead by an ANC security guard at the movement's headquarters in Johannesburg. "He was given a warning to stop, one shot was fired and he was killed," Pello Jordan, an ANC spokesman said. This is the organisation's second burglary in a week.

● TOKYO: Japan is considering lifting sanctions against South Africa in the light of moves to abolish apartheid, officials said yesterday. Sanctions include a ban on direct investment, limited cultural exchanges and a refusal to issue tourist visas. (AFP)



Survivors' story: Asia Khatun, aged 40, carrying her one-year-old son through Bangladesh yesterday as she awaits international relief following the cyclone which hit Bangladesh on April 30. Her husband and five daughters also survived the disaster,

but tornados and further flooding have added to their misery. At least 37 more people were killed yesterday. The government has not altered its official death toll of 126,000 for several days even though many more bodies are being found daily. Yesterday also saw

the arrival of the first American relief aircraft. Further food and medical supplies came on a Chinese Boeing 707 and two aircraft sponsored by the charity group Care and the United Nations. Another American cargo plane is expected soon.

Mexico trade pact hits obstacles

FROM ANDREA DABROWSKI IN MEXICO CITY

IN WHAT Mexicans take to be the first sign of a loss of national sovereignty, there is a growing sense that the fate of a proposed new trade accord will be determined by the American congress ahead of the June 1 deadline.

President Salinas seems to have staked the future of the Mexican economy on achieving a free-trade agreement with America and Canada, but may have jeopardized the success of his domestic economic policies if the so-called "fast track" trade formula is rejected in America. Through the fast track system, President Bush would be able to negotiate a trade pact with Señor Salinas within a year, without congress having to examine and change every clause — a process which most people believe would kill the negotiation.

Opposition by American labour unions has cast some uncertainty on the congressional vote. One argument against it is that Mexico may simply become a pool of cheap labour.

Disillusion mars Nepal election

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN KATHMANDU

NEPAL is to test its fledgling democracy in the country's first multiparty elections in more than three decades tomorrow, a year after King Birendra relinquished most of his powers. Revered as an incarnation of Vishnu, the Hindu deity, the king has quietly watched the unfolding campaign from his unprepossessing, redbrick palace in central Kathmandu.

But he must feel a certain satisfaction that the people's move towards genuine democracy has taken some of the gloss off people's enthusiasm for party politics. The campaign has been occasionally violent and filled with infighting and intrigue. There have been half a dozen politically motivated killings, and fears of violence have prompted the authorities to ban sales of alcohol until tomorrow's election is over.

The coalition caretaker government that took over a year



ago in a mood of national excitement and expectation is leaving office with a whimper, having lost its popularity amid reports of corruption and maladministration. For most of the 11 million Nepalis nothing has changed.

The Nepali Congress, the party that fought so triumphantly for democracy, is unlikely to win an outright majority, although it is bound to be the biggest single party. It was the main component of

the caretaker government, which also included the communists, and is thus blamed for not bringing better times to the poor Himalayan kingdom.

The Congress's main rivals tomorrow are the communists, whose outdated slogans and discredited ideas are thriving in the landlocked country. The main communist party divides tens of thousands of people: to its final campaign rally this week.

The caretaker government, headed by the former prime minister, has indicted 42,000 retired police officers and servicemen for election duty, besides putting the 35,000-strong army on alert in case of trouble. More than 1,300 candidates from 21 parties are competing for 205 seats in the key lower house of parliament.

Kathmandu has been covered in political graffiti in the weeks leading up to this generation's first genuine election. Walls have been defaced with symbols for the benefit of a largely illiterate people — the tree for the Congress and the sun for the Nepal communist party (marxists and leninists). The plough, a bicycle, a water-tap, a bee and a moon are some of the symbols used by the other parties.

King Birendra's family is said to be divided over his decision to give up his powers in the face of last year's pro-democracy demonstrations, in which at least 200 people died in clashes with security forces. Educated at Eton and Harvard, King Birendra inherited the throne in 1972, barely 20 years after the kingdom was opened to the world.

Until 1950 almost nothing had changed for more than a century: hardly a road, hospital, factory or school was built, and foreigners and their ideas were kept out.

Earthly problems of 'living God'

FROM JOANNA PITMAN IN TOKYO

IN JAPAN, where a handkerchief of land in Tokyo can cost millions of pounds, a tax scandal is highlighting a problem that faces every Japanese: the cost of arranging a final resting place.

Soka Gakkai, the lay Buddhist organisation which claims a following of 15 million Japanese and 1.26 million foreigners in 115 countries, has admitted its failure to report to the tax authorities profits from its graveyard businesses. The organisation, run by Daisaku Ikeda, a self-styled "living god", nets an estimated £760 million a year from followers' donations.

The unreported money was made, according to tax officials, from the sale and rental of grave sites in five huge cemeteries near Mount Fuji. Soka Gakkai's graveyard operation has been run since 1977 as a joint venture with Mitsubishi Corporation.

Rendering tombs beyond the reach of most Japanese. Yet Japan's 123 million people are all expected to arrange for their final residence in a tomb that is fit and proper. Millions worry that they cannot afford to die. The cost of an average plot starts at £5,000 and can rise to £50,000. To this must be added the gravestone (up to £60,000) and annual maintenance fees. Mitsubishi Bank and Tokai Bank have developed the "memorial loan", a mortgage intended to cushion the financial blow of dying.

The bereaved who fail to win allocation of grave space in Japan's national grave lotteries and cannot afford their own site must keep the ashes of their loved ones at home in the family altar. Yet keeping an urn for more than 49 days is bad luck and anyone who has not arranged for a "memorial loan" by then must lodge their urn in the equivalent of a locker at a temple.

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Pessimism persists as Baker starts talks

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN CAIRO

AT A meeting on the banks of the Nile which may prove heavier on symbolism than substance, James Baker, the American secretary of state, and Aleksandr Bessmertnykh, the Soviet foreign minister, will tomorrow open a week considered crucial for peace in the Middle East.

Mr Baker will be starting his fourth tour of the region in two months. It is one which both Arab diplomats and his own advisers see as providing a last chance to secure the convening of a peace conference, which is at the heart of the current American plan. With hope fading that old obstacles can be overcome in the postwar atmosphere, a state department official said: "There are still a number of open questions about whether or not it will be possible to put together a regional peace conference. This is one last trip to see whether or not the possibility exists for a conference to be held."

Mr Baker has always made it clear that he holds open the option of simply giving up on what some experts believe is an impossible mission under current regional circumstances. When he wound up his last whistle-stop tour on April 26, he made clear that he needed "some answers" from Israel before deciding whether to keep trying.

A key stumbling block remains the role of the United Nations in such a conference. Syria and the other Arab states insist that it be given a central part but that has been rejected by Israel, which regards the world body as hostile to its interests, and still resents the 1975 UN resolution equating Zionism with racism. Israel is also unhappy about any important role for the Europeans.

Another obstacle has been the role of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, which Israel has refused to recognise as a participant. Israel has also ruled out participation by any Palestinian from annexed east Jerusalem, which it regards as sovereign territory. A meeting yesterday between Mr Bessmertnykh and Yasser Arafat, the PLO leader, was cancelled for what were described as "logistical" reasons.

The gloom which has begun to darken estimates of Mr Baker's prospects has not been lifted by President Bush's remarks on Wednesday that he remained "moderately optimistic" about his secretary of state's chances. Israel's announcement of more Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank and the addition of 110 companies to

the Arab League boycott list have eroded any expectations that victory over Iraq might result in a "new order" in the region.

The difference now is the central role of co-operation between Washington and Moscow in an area where Cold War rivalry helped to accelerate polarisation.

Tomorrow's Nile meeting, which will concentrate on the peace conference plan but also embrace wider arms control issues, is an example of how confrontation has been replaced by a mutual desire to solve problems. The talks are seen as the most overt sign of harmony between the United States and Soviet Union over the Middle East since President Carter and Brezhnev issued a joint statement on the region in 1977.

That so alarmed both Egypt and Israel that it was seen as one catalyst in persuading President Sadat of Egypt to make his historic journey to Jerusalem during November 1977.

While the Gulf war has weakened the position of Iraq, Jordan and the PLO, it has enhanced the security of a number of Middle East nations including Israel, Egypt, Syria and Saudi Arabia. "The parties on the winning side of the Gulf war feel strengthened, and are thus probably less likely to make concessions," said Samuel Lewis, a former US ambassador to Israel.

Tahseen Bashier, a veteran Egyptian diplomat, said that Mr Baker had run into the old attitude of Arabs and Israelis both wanting the other side to make all the compromises. "The Arabs want the Americans to pressure Israel," he said, "while the Israelis want the American government to pressure the Saudis and the Syrians."

Baker warning, page 1
Coser Cruise O'Brien, page 10



Baker: last effort to find if peace talks are possible



Home in style: a Kurdish refugee family occupying all the available space on a bulldozer as they came down from mountain camps yesterday to return to their home in the northern Iraqi town of Zakho

Allies caught in quagmire

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

THREE and a half weeks after President Bush, at Britain's bidding, announced hastily drawn-up plans to establish protected enclaves for Kurdish refugees in northern Iraq, it is doubtful whether Washington and London would still be prepared to battle for the credit. More likely, Mr Bush is kicking himself for listening to his transatlantic allies.

Although the lives of thousands of Kurds have been saved, American and allied forces are getting sucked into the "quagmire" that Mr Bush promised Americans he would avoid. It took sustained British, French and Turkish pressure to persuade him to commit American troops to protecting the Kurds, and now he cannot get them out. At the White House, officials now utter the dreaded "Q" word.

The administration initially hoped that allied forces could be replaced by a United Nations military peacekeep-

Saddam urged to accept UN force

FROM ANDREW FINKE IN ISTANBUL, MARTIN FLETCHER AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

THE Bush administration yesterday asked Baghdad to help bypass strict Turkish controls on the export of arms to the Kurds being resettled there. But, in Diyarbakir, an American military spokesman said the base, near Amadiya, was being readied in anticipation of getting aid to the refugees.

In southern Iraq a UN-monitored demilitarised zone has been formally declared on the Iraq-Kuwait border, a UN spokesman announced. Majed Fayad said the departure of all US, Kuwaiti and Iraqi troops from the zone, called for in the security council resolution ending the Gulf war, had been completed and verified.

A Turkish press report claimed yesterday that the US

American diplomacy worries Golan settlers

FROM PAUL ADAMS IN GAMA IN THE OCCUPIED GOLAN HEIGHTS

JOURNALISTS pursuing the ramifications of American Secretary of State James Baker's "territory for peace" formula are likely to be sent to a spectacular nature reserve near Kazzin for a lesson in Jewish history. Perched on a rocky ridge above the Sea of Galilee, Gama's ruins are silent, but for the distant boom of Israeli artillery fire.

"If you give away Gama, you give away Jerusalem," said Dedi Gofar, referring to the Jewish capital, destroyed by the Romans in AD67. After subduing Gama, Vespasian and Titus went on to destroy Jerusalem, bringing to an end the first Jewish revolt.

Mr Gofar, who co-ordinates the absorption of new immigrants at Kazzin, is not the only settler who believes that to allow Gama to fall into enemy hands again would be to invite another disaster. "There are many people who believe that this land has to do with the protection of Jerusalem," said Oded Ambar, a ranger at the Gama reserve.

With American, Soviet and European diplomats beating well-worn paths in the Middle East, searching for an elusive breakthrough in the peace process, settlers in the remote Golan Heights are feeling anxious. "I think it is possible that America wants to start with the Golan," said Kazzin's deputy mayor, Meir Monitz.

"But we are sure that the Israeli government is strong enough not to allow anyone to negotiate about the Golan," he said. In a climate of increasing unemployment and lack of housing in Israel — both spurred by the unprecedented wave of immigration from the Soviet Union — young Israelis, including immigrants, are discovering the benefits of life in the Golan.

Iris Hochman, a technician at a mineral water plant near Kazzin, has just built a house. "When I came here, I did not think much to the fact that these areas are occupied," she said. "So I don't even want to think about the option that we will return all of this."

There are only about 15,000 indigenous Druze Arabs remaining in the far northern villages, but Mr Monitz said he had never met a single Druze who wanted to return to Syrian sovereignty. "I am sure that 95 per cent want to stay in Israel," he said.

But the Druze villagers tell a different story. "We are Syrians in everything," said Yusef Abu Jebel, a shopkeeper in Majdal Shams, home to 10,000 Druze. "We want to go back to our homeland, Syria."

Former Afghan king sets out peace plan

Rome — Zahir Shah, the former king of Afghanistan, unveiled a detailed plan yesterday for ending 12 years of civil war there and establishing free elections and a parliamentary system (Reuters reports).

"It is for the Afghans to freely decide on our country's future regime," the exiled monarch, aged 76, said in Rome, where he has lived since being deposed in 1973.

The plan calls for setting up a committee of rebel Majahidin commanders, politicians and other figures in Afghanistan and abroad. The committee would create a temporary executive charged with achieving peace and drafting a constitution.

The executive would also prepare to hold, under United Nations auspices, a traditional assembly of tribal notables which would work towards free elections and a parliamentary system. "I am convinced that, in line with the basic principles of Islam and our national traditions, the majority of the people of Afghanistan will choose and support a democratic form of government," he said.

Fences mended

Belgrade — Yugoslavia and Israel will soon renew diplomatic ties severed almost 24 years ago, a Yugoslav foreign ministry spokesman said. Belgrade had been reluctant to do so because of its large Muslim community and close relations with Arab countries (AP).

Health finding

Geneva — The Gulf war has had a dramatic and disruptive effect on the health of Palestinians in the Israeli occupied territories, the director general of the World Health Organisation, Hiroshi Nakajima, said in a report. He blamed falling family incomes and rising unemployment (AFP).

Cholera control

Baghdad — A United Nations official confirmed that 52 people had contracted cholera in Iraq but said the cases did not point to an epidemic. Health workers were containing the disease with the restoration of normal power and water supplies to much of the country since the Gulf war (Reuters).

Retirement offer

Baghdad — President Saddam Hussein has offered automatic retirement to soldiers and non-commissioned officers who have served 25 years in the army. The defence ministry newspaper, al-Qadisiyah, said soldiers no longer need the approval of their senior officers to retire (Reuters).

Britain's pioneer spacewoman prepares for a rocket flight into orbit and beyond the credibility gap

Set for launch at last after mission circus

HELEN Sharman, set to be the first Briton to go into space, deserves more than a passing cheer from family and friends, even if the project itself has been an organisational, financial and scientific circus.

A week from today Miss Sharman should be on her way to the Soviet Union's Mir space station and a place in the history books. The Juno mission, finally counting down, despite its failure to secure serious sponsorship.

When Yuri Gagarin became in 1961 the first man in space he was transformed into an international celebrity, fêted with a tour of Britain and tea with the Queen.

Locked in quarantine at Baikonur launch centre Miss Sharman, aged 27, a Sheffield-born confectionery technologist, and Major Tim Mace, aged 35, of the Army Air Corps, her back-up, know they can never rival Gagarin's acclaim.

Indeed, compared with pop stars and footballers Miss Sharman is about as well known among most of her own countrymen as a fourth division right back. The blame rests more on the publicity machine which, initially frantic, creaked into silence as the project careered from one financial black hole to the next in search of ultimately elusive sponsors.

Nevertheless, Miss

Helen Sharman from Sheffield is ready to claim her place in the history books as the first Briton in space, despite a series of hitches, Nick Nuttall reports

Sharman has demonstrated considerable fortitude in the face of rigorous psychological and physical training and the not inconsiderable emotional battering from a scheme which, from one week to next, swayed from closure to knife edge while being racked by political infighting. Even if the sponsorship promises had been realised, the nation was, in truth, never likely to have dusted down the Jubilee Union Jacks and huddled round the television sets as millions did when Apollo landed on the Moon.

Yet, without Miss Sharman's impressive cool head and courage, the Russians would never have agreed to the mission continuing after the marketing and publicity men fled in failure for more familiar deals.

Possibly her ultimate misfortune is that this flight comes too late in the annals of manned space flight to be more than a national curiosity. The food scientist follows more than 200 people from countries including Vietnam, France, Saudi Arabia and India into orbit, with about a dozen of them women.

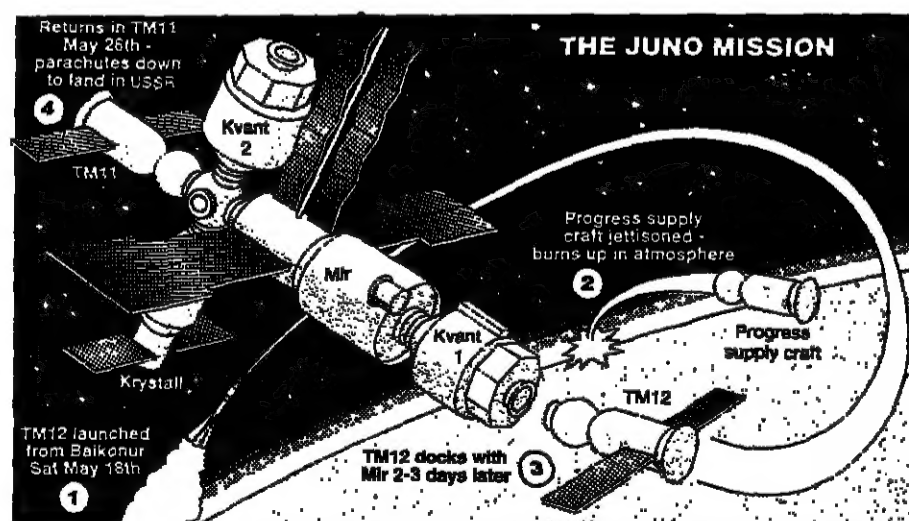
There is also an almost overwhelming yet unrealis-

tic view among the general public that launching a spacecraft has become as hazardous as dispatching a No 12 from the morning bus sheds. Space flight continues to be a risky business, the tragic consequences of which were most recently demonstrated in January 1986, when the space shuttle Columbia exploded seconds after launch, killing its crew of seven including a female schoolteacher.

Juno does have its own unique casualties, though, which cannot be ignored. Miss Sharman leaves behind an estimated £5 million (£3 million) debt which the eventual organisers, the Moscow Narodny Bank in London, may never recover, although even in the final days officials hope to sell television rights and attract some sponsors.

Zoon Watches, Interflora and Memelek did agree to sponsor Juno, as did ITV with a £500,000 television rights deal, but all pulled out when the estimated £16 million mission, reduced by the Russians to about £5 million without British science, failed to attract enough funds.

There are also concerns that, far from promoting



Anglo-Soviet space co-operation, its connotations have left the Russians bewildered and reluctant to forge partnerships with Britain in the future.

The situation was not helped by the recent decision of the Science and Engineering Research Council to shelve Jet X, the British portion of the Spectrum mission for which the Russians have already built a spacecraft.

The mission, which once planned to fly more than 20 quite worthwhile British experiments, will take none of them because of its failure to attract enough sponsorship funds. This has certainly played its part in Juno's serious credibility gap, with claims that Miss Sharman is just there to brew tea and dust the instruments.

What went wrong with Juno depends on who is talking. There are many versions. What appears clear is that, even when the most persuasive marketing men

and grey-suited bankers are deployed, not everything is fundable by T-shirts and logos.

Space has proved again that it is a uniquely expensive business, especially in respect to manned missions, which the British government has always been unwilling to support and British industry ultimately feared to back when the chaos set in.

Other nations, including France and Austria, have taken up the offer of paying for the spare seat on a Soyuz spacecraft, since the Russians stopped free trips in 1988 in favour of foreign funding.

The money has, however, come from governments rather than the mercurial advertising departments of commerce and the dreams of ill-equipped public relations teams.



Sharman: tough training for hazardous trip

trip was paid for from the outset by his employer, TBS, the Japanese television station.

Juno wallowed in a cycle of indecision, with companies unwilling to commit funds to a scheme that the backers could not guarantee and the Russians unwilling to guarantee a seat until funds were secured.

Whiff of garlic lifts Mir menu

By OUR TECHNOLOGY CORRESPONDENT

ONE of the first sensations Miss Sharman will notice as she climbs into Mir, 250 miles above Earth, is likely to be a strong whiff of garlic.

One of the casualties of many months in orbit is the sense of taste. This has prompted cosmonauts to request spicier food to be put on visiting Progress supply rockets with garlic high on the menu. Other space staples include tinned meats and fruits.

During the following six days the huge space station, which is something between an hotel and a science park, will be home to Miss Sharman and four others. Conditions are hardly five-star, but Mir is far from uncomfortable, according to Phil Clark, of Moyina Space Consultants in London and an authority on the Soviet space programme. "It was designed for men to stay up to two to three years a time. It is designed to be comfortable," he said.

The TM12 Soyuz capsule carrying Miss Sharman could take up to three days to dock with Mir, according to Air Vice-Marshal Peter Howard, Juno's medical adviser, who will join Miss Sharman in quarantine in the days before the launch from Baikonur, Kazakhstan. Miss Sharman and the two cosmonauts already on the station are scheduled to return on May 26 using the

TM11 capsule which is docked at the front of Mir.

Miss Sharman has been well trained for the rigours of the trip at the cosmonauts' training camp at Star City, near Moscow. During the launch, she and Anatoly Artsebasaki and Sergei Krikalev will be hurled into space at speeds approaching 18,000 mph. As the rocket climbs the crew, strapped flat in the lower part of the Soyuz module, will encounter a force three to four times that of gravity. Within 350 seconds they should be in space.

The launch will be very noisy and the vibrations alarming but, according to Mr Howard, the experience should be "not at all uncomfortable".

The programme on Mir will become clear over the coming days. Attached to the station are three science modules, Kvant 1 and Kvant 2 and Krystall. Here cosmonauts carry out studies into viruses, such as HIV, which causes Aids, and new, heat-resistant liquids which can be mixed in weightless conditions. Miss Sharman, a chemistry graduate of Sheffield University, is expected to assist but is unlikely to be allowed to do very much.

The mission may carry three British schools projects orchestrated by Rodney Backland, the scheme's former engineer.

Poland to open files for hunters of war criminals in Britain

From ROGER BOYES IN WARSAW

ON THE day Britain's War Crimes Bill received the Royal Assent, the Polish government yesterday made clear that it was ready to open its comprehensive wartime archives to British investigators to try to harden the evidence against several hundred suspected war criminals believed to have taken refuge in the United Kingdom.

Senator Ryszard Juskiewicz, director of Poland's Main War Crimes Commission, said yesterday that his archives, approximately one and a quarter miles of dossiers, could help the unit which is being set up under Britain's new War Crimes Act. The Polish commission's chief historian, Dr Jacek Wilczur, added: "We know now that many, many murderers — Germans, Ukrainians, Latvians and Estonians, among others — took shelter in Britain, claiming to be refugees from communism."

A Home Office enquiry which reported two years ago investigated 301 alleged war criminals but found enough evidence against only three of them to provide any prospect of a conviction if they were brought to trial. Further investigation was recommended. Since then the Los Angeles-based Simon Wiesenthal Centre has provided additional names.

Senator Juskiewicz laments, it is still very difficult to prise open Soviet archives. "Despite the promises of Gorbachev, we are having real problems with NKVD [now KGB] files."

The reason is clear. The Polish parliament has extended the brief of its hunters to include all Stalin-era crimes committed before 1956. That is an immense and completely new brief. "Many Poles want us to go even further, right up to the collapse of communism. But ours is a peaceful, not a French-style revolution. We do not hunger for revenge."

Adding Stalinist crimes to the agenda has forced important changes in the Main Commission. Not least of these is that it has had to be purged. Several dozen staff were dismissed because, in the senator's words, "they were clearly tied to the old regime and in some cases to the intelligence services."



Protective huddle: a pro-communist Serbian couple are heckled by anti-communist Serbs during a Belgrade peace march yesterday involving several thousand people

Yugoslav accord cracking as unrest shakes republics

From DESSA TREVISAN IN BELGRADE

THE fragile agreement signed by Yugoslavia's state presidency to avoid further bloodshed seemed to be cracking yesterday, with recriminations flying between the rival republics of Serbia and Croatia.

Shots and explosions were reported throughout Thursday night in eastern Croatian regions as well as further south in Krajina, where trains have been repeatedly halted. About 80 British tourists were evacuated from the Shibenok resort on the Adriatic coast, which has been declared a dangerous region by the Foreign Office.

But Serbian and Croatian politicians said that the agreement giving the army powers to intervene in troubled areas of Croatia was still holding, although Slobodan Milosevic, the Serbian leader, accused Croatia of state terrorism against the Serbs while Croatian leaders accused Serbia of war propaganda.

Franjo Tudjman, the Croatian leader, has rejected suggestions that he disarm police reservists, implying that more may be recruited under Croatian opposition pressure. Twelve opposition parties met on Thursday and pledged to set differences aside to support the leadership. They demanded that the defence of Croatia be organised and described the agreement as harmful.

In the Serbian populated Krajina region Milan Martić, the head of the rebel police, said that they will not disarm until the other side does so first. But an associate of Dr Tudjman said: "I believe it (the agreement) is still viable, though many difficulties lie ahead. At best, it gives a breathing space after weeks of tension and a dangerous escalation of ethnic violence."

PARIS: Jean-Marie Le Pen, the French National Front leader who heads the extreme right-wing group in the European Parliament, said yesterday that he would ask parliament to halt all financial aid to Yugoslavia's communist government and organise help for Slovenia and Croatia. M. Le Pen led a delegation of French and German extreme right-wing MEPs to Croatia this week. (Reuters)

Mafia used Caravaggio as drugs collateral

Rome — A priceless painting by Caravaggio, stolen from a Palermo church in 1969, has been used by Mafia families for more than 20 years as collateral in drug deals, according to unofficial sources in the Palermo crime squad and the ministry of culture. (Paul Bompard writes).

Investigators say the painting, *Nativity of San Lorenzo*, painted in Palermo in 1609, probably never left Sicily and was not secretly sold to a foreign collector as was at first believed.

Town cut off

Geneva — An avalanche has covered the railway and road in the upper Rhône valley, cutting off Zermatt. There were no casualties, as a warning was given several hours beforehand. About 25 wooden buildings were destroyed. Helicopters were providing a shuttle service to Zermatt.

Spy catchers

Budapest — The Hungarian government is to set up a special committee chaired by the prime minister to review the cases of thousands of people suspected of having worked as secret agents and informers for the former communist regime and who now hold important state or private sector jobs.

Strikes spread

Madrid — A spate of intermittent air and rail strikes has hit Spain's dwindling tourist industry. Aviaco, Spain's second carrier, cancelled 30 domestic flights owing to a walkout by both air and ground crews. Similar action threatens the Iberia airline and Spanish railways next

Soldier dies in Armenian attack

From ASSOCIATED PRESS IN ARTZVASHEN

ARMENIAN militants attacked Soviet interior ministry troops in Azerbaijan with machineguns and grenades yesterday, killing one soldier and wounding eight, the Soviet media reported.

The Azerbaijani press agency Asa-Itada said the attack took place at dawn on a road between the villages of Kehne Gishlak and Tati in Akstafa province, little more than a mile from the Armenian border. Radio Russia said 14 troops were travelling in two military lorries when they were ambushed. A few hours later, Soviet troops with 11 armoured vehicles and six helicopters crossed the border



into Armenia, surrounded the village of Paravakar and demanded that villagers turn over their weapons, the Armenian interior ministry reported.

Hamutun Khachatryan, a ministry official, said there were preliminary reports that the helicopters fired into the village, which he said has fewer than 500 residents. "There are some indications that the attack on Paravakar may be a retaliation for the attack in Azerbaijan," he said. No casualties were reported. He said three villagers were negotiating with the troops to prevent bloodshed.

Romania stands by security pact

By MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

THE Romanian foreign minister yesterday strongly defended his country's signing of a new security treaty with Moscow which other east European leaders claim could be used as a precedent to restrict their sovereignty.

Adrian Nastase, who has just ended two days of talks in London, was speaking shortly before thousands demonstrated in Bucharest for the return of exiled King Michael.

The demonstration came after state radio broadcast a message by the former monarch who went into exile 44 years ago. The demonstrators denounced the leaders of the ruling National Salvation Front as usurpers, and said the king's return was the only way to resolve Romania's political and economic problems.

Mr Nastase said former King Michael, who was de-

ported within 24 hours after his last attempt to enter the country, was welcome, with his family, to visit Romania as a tourist. "But if he wants to come as a king, he would first have to be recognised as king."

No negotiations were under way over any new attempt for him to return.

The domestic trouble erupted as Romania is under attack by its neighbours for signing a security treaty proposed by Moscow as a replacement for the defunct Warsaw Pact. Romania and the Soviet Union agreed not to join any alliance hostile to the other party. Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland have rejected any such clause in similar proposed bilateral treaties, saying this would limit their freedom to move closer to the West, effectively ruling out any chance of joining Nato.

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Conor Cruise O'Brien

Gulf morality the archbishop overlooks

The war against Saddam was right, but nothing can justify the Western betrayal of the Kurds to Saddam's repression

Addressing the national Gulf service of remembrance and thanksgiving in Glasgow Cathedral last week, the Archbishop of York, Dr John Habgood, asked: "What if doing the right thing not merely fails to stem the tide of suffering, but actually extends or diversifies it?"

Like all "what if" questions, this one is prompted by guesswork, and invites further guesswork. If something is done — whether right or wrong — we can never know what would have happened had it remained undone. Yet in our daily lives we must all guess, and contemplate the results of our guesswork, in the hope of guessing better next time. Statesmen are different only in that the results of their guesswork are on a much larger scale. Surrounded as he is by sophisticated technology and advice based — or deemed to be based — on huge stores of information, the statesman, at the moment of decision, must still guess.

Let us consider the archbishop's "what if", and try to guess our way round it as best we can. To begin with, it is a rather oddly constructed hypothesis. How can doing the right thing extend the tide of suffering? In these circumstances, is it not the case that what was done in the belief that it was the right thing, turned out to be the wrong thing?

What the archbishop was talking about — whether we judge it to be a right thing or a wrong thing — was the decision to use force to liberate Kuwait from the Iraqis. That decision, he implied, extended the tide of suffering, hitherto more or less confined to the Kuwaitis, to engulf most of the population of Iraq, especially the Kurds and Shia Muslims. Many people will be inclined to agree.

Yet it is possible to hold that the decision probably averted greater disasters than actually came about, and that the disasters which befell the Kurds and Shia Muslims were not inevitable results of the decision to liberate Kuwait, but the avoidable results of two indefensible and mutually incompatible decisions taken later.

On the first point, the basic case — admittedly hypothetical — is that if Saddam Hussein had got away with his annexation of Kuwait, he would have gone on to achieve a near-monopoly of Arab oil, through the annexation of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states. With the colossal revenues then available to him, he could have turned Greater Iraq into a superpower, with nuclear weapons and long-distance delivery systems. He would have been in a position to blackmail Europe, and if his blackmail had been resisted, the war that would then have had to be fought would have been far more destructive than the one just over. The Rhineland analogy applies. In short, "the tide of suffering" would have been even worse if "the right thing" had not been done.

There is nothing hypothetical about the Kurds and the Shia

Muslims — who constitute a majority of the population of Iraq. They are not victims of the decision to resist Saddam and liberate Kuwait but of two subsequent decisions: to encourage Saddam's subjects to rise up against him, and to leave Saddam in control of Iraq and allow him to crush those of his subjects who rallied to the allies' call.

This was not a case of doing what was believed to be the right thing without foreseeing the untoward consequences. It was a case of things that were manifestly wrong. The Kurds and Shia Muslims are victims of one of the ugliest pieces of *realpolitik* ever practised by democratic countries. The present humanitarian effort is right in itself, but it would not have been necessary if these people had not been cynically betrayed, to their ruin, by Western policy decisions after the outbreak of war.

The principal villains of the piece appear to be the American State Department, seconded by the British Foreign Office. After victory in Kuwait, President Bush's main concern was to get the boys home as soon as possible, avoiding any possibility of a Vietnam-like situation. The State Department appears to have convinced the president that the safest way to do this was to leave Saddam in control of Iraq. That decision entailed allowing him to reassert his authority in disputed areas, so leaving the rebels at his — negligible — mercy.

From the point of view of getting the boys home, this was rotten advice, since the results of taking it have included tying down American and British troops to provide havens for the survivors. And the idea of leaving Saddam in power in order to get the boys home was never more than a selling point for the State Department with the president.

The real reason for the State Department's advice on this was its *idée fixe* (shared by the Foreign Office) that Iraq must be strong, with Saddam in charge. Awareness of this *idée fixe* is what encouraged Saddam to think he could get away with the annexation of Kuwait, and so led to the allied forces are also victims of that *idée fixe*, and the long and continuing appeasement of Saddam. And the *idée fixe* remains.

It is right that questions about the morality of the Gulf war should be raised. In that respect, the archbishop is on safe ground. But the spotlight should not be just on the decision to liberate Kuwait. There are other questions, about Western diplomacy towards Iraq before the annexation of Kuwait, about Western encouragement of rebellion in Iraq, and about the betrayal of those who did rebel. Perhaps the archbishop and other moral leaders will now devote some attention to these questions.

Clifford Longley is on holiday.

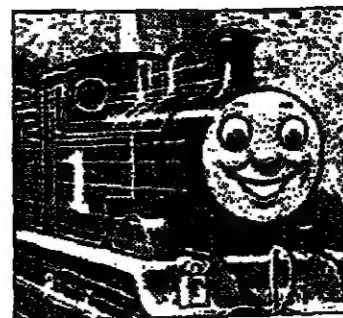
Craig Seton tells of a Labour excursion into sexism that arrived at the wrong destination

How Thomas steamed into party politics

which, they privately accept, is run largely by moderate socialists.

The story, which first appeared in a local free newspaper, appeared not only to the national press, always on the alert for tales of left-wing lunacy, but to Tory Central Office. Experienced backroom tacticians of any party worth its salt know that no issue is so minor that it cannot be inflated, especially when elections are imminent.

Last month, three weeks before the local elections, Thomas was to feature, albeit briefly, in a Tory party election broadcast. It dealt with the supposed leftward leanings of some Labour councils and quoted Thomas's difficulties in Dudley as a prime example. An anonymous woman was seen complaining that the council wanted to ban the Thomas books.



Thomas: a bumpy ride

came the opening shot in a black propaganda campaign in the phony war before the general election. Many similar cases will follow. It illustrates how trivial local issues reach a national audience and often get distorted along the way.

dirty tricks. They said they had no intention of banning Thomas and have demanded a retraction.

What is clear is that the tank engine with the smiling face did appear in a draft report on gender equality sent to schools for consultation. It did say that Thomas took stereotyping a step further because he and the other engines who had all the adventures were male while all the carriages they pulled had female names. The message, said the report, was clear: men lead and women follow, even if it was unintentional.

Unfortunately a later reference in the report giving guidance to schools said: "dubious material should be removed immediately. Labour insists the report was saying only that sexist material should be balanced by unbiased examples. That is what the final

document on gender will say. Dudley Conservatives seem slightly abashed that the issue reached the national political arena, but say they had no part in encouraging Tory Central Office to take it up, even conceding that the big players in London might have got the Thomas affair slightly out of context. Jack Edmonds, the Dudley Tory leader said: "It was political biceps."

One thing is clear. Thomas the Tank Engine will be remembered as just another example of a Labour council getting its fingers burned by handling fiery issues such as sexism and racism.

As a single shot in a big battle, it did not have an ounce of the potency of those issues that can be used to hammer an opposing party. Thomas may have been saved in Dudley schools, if he were ever under threat, but the issue did not help the local Tories in the elections: they lost three seats to Labour.

But, at Central Office, there will be a Tory party worker who first spotted Thomas's potential and has chafed it up as a propaganda victory, however small. And, there is a general election still to come.

South salutes the Queen

New ground is broken next week with a royal visit to Texas and Florida.

Peter Stothard, US editor, reports

Once upon a time kings and queens put on masks to move unrecognized among their subjects. When the Queen arrives in Miami next weekend, the people plan to put on masks which will make it hard even for the corgis to recognise Her Majesty.

Florida is looking forward to its first full royal visit with what *The Miami Herald* describes as "monarchmania". *Herald* readers are urged to join the fun by making its special souvenir QREI mask and by attending a reception where royal look-alikes ("pull out the tarts, the best British style") will vie for a free weekend close to Buckingham Palace at London's Intercontinental Hotel.

The Queen may not be flattered by this imitation, but she should know that it is America's sincerest homage. Every city has long had its "wannabes", (who "wanna be somebody else") and more recently its "Madonnabes" (who just "wanna be Madonna"). Only Miami will have "Queenabes", and it is proud of them.

Floridians have had to wait almost 40 Elizabethan years for this opportunity, and they are determined to get the most out of it. So are the Texans, who are next on the tour list. So is the British government, which sees millions of dollars in trade, investment and goodwill following the royal standard around two of the richest, fastest growing and most politically powerful states in the union.

President Bush invited the Queen to make a state visit to Washington a year ago. The palace accepted, and the traditional round of state dinners and garden parties will begin on Tuesday. Last week, the State Department's elegant protocol chief, Joseph



California, 1983. After north, east and west, the "new south" at last lays out the red carpet.

Reed, sat in his photograph-lined office (only 19 pictures of the president) and described the "colossally complex architecture" which should ensure that everything goes to plan.

As long as Concorde arrives at Andrews Airforce base at 10.10 precisely, the presidential helicopters will whisk the Queen's party to Washington for the 10.56 motorcade and 11am arrival at the White House. With the capital in its best bib and tucker, the Queen will stand where hundreds of lesser heads of state have stood before. "Just look at that photograph," said ambassador Reed, pointing to his wall, "and substitute the Queen for Gorbachev."

Caring for the Queen is not the city's supreme test. Last Friday alone, Mr Reed's responsibilities included similar and simultaneous "architecture" arrangements for the presidents of

Finland, Cameroon and Italy as well as a troupe of Balts.

Outside Washington, neither the paths nor the pathfinders are so smooth. No British monarch has ever been to Tampa or the Alamo, or to the Baltimore Orioles baseball stadium, where the Queen is to watch her first game on Wednesday night. No members of the royal family — and few white Washingtonians — have ever visited the Marshall Heights Community Development centre in the capital's north-eastern "badlands".

The visit is intended to recall that of the Queen's father, George VI, in June 1939, when he won the heart of Britain's future ally against Hitler by sharing an informal picnic with President Roosevelt, drinking beer on the lawn and eating a hot-dog. There have been questions about whether the Queen will break her own rules and nibble in public at

America's national baseball food. The answer is "unlikely".

Floridians are asking why, after 40 years, the Queen has decided to come at all. "It's a mystery," according to one local newspaper. Brushing off jokes that it must be because she wants to retire, the people of America's most famous "elderly zone" have decided that it must be to meet General Norman Schwarzkopf at his home base.

The Queen is used to giving thanks for American war efforts. It was one of the purposes of her first trip to Washington in 1951, when as a young princess she showed support for President Truman in Korea; also of her last trip, in 1983, when she thanked Ronald Reagan for his help in the Falklands war. But the present trip was planned long before Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait. General Schwarzkopf is a convenient answer to Floridian questions, but a

better answer is Mickey Mouse. Almost half a million Britons visit Florida each year, and British business is booming in the "new south", as opposed to the old "deep" south. Although the Queen will miss the Magic Kingdom (there are limits to how close a real queen should come to Cinderella and Snow White), the home of Walt Disney is where her dollar-spending subjects' hearts are.

Texas have reacted more steadily than their Florida neighbours. No Queensbee contests are planned in Houston, only a trip to a Baptist church and an ex-servicemen's medical centre. The *Dallas Morning News* has limited itself to asking its readers to recommend Texan recipes.

Royal trips have traditionally begun in Canada, bestowing grace upon loyal territories before moving on to those that got away. When the future Edward VII made a pathfinding visit in 1883, it was on just such a brief detour, one which was so successful that Queen Victoria admonished her children from further talk of "horrid Yankees".

When a later Prince of Wales, the future Edward VIII, visited America in 1919, he even bought a small ranch in Canada, which became a useful excuse when he wanted to cross the Atlantic to misbehave among the matrons of New York. George VI's 1939 tour, the first by a reigning monarch, began in Canada, as have most of the Queen's own American journeys, which have covered most of the United States but never its nether regions.

Miami is now waiting eagerly for its time to come. The Queen is an international star. And she has been one not for 15 minutes or 15 months but for four decades. Yesterday, the *Herald* added to its reader's cut-out-and-keep mask a special royal calendar, an etiquette guide "for that chance royal encounter" and a primer on cricket. "The main thing," concluded columnist Dave Barry, is that "although the Queen is of royal blood, you are a citizen of the United States of America, and you should never forget what that means. It means she is much better than you."

...and moreover

MATTHEW PARRIS

Around noon on Thursday, on my way to prime minister's questions at Westminster, and travelling on the District Line, I conducted a poll among (car no 17050) who were not tourists. The interviews took place between Tower Hill and Westminster Underground stations, and were conducted singly to reduce the tendency for any one respondent to influence the others.

Surprisingly, it is quite possible to conduct 33 private interviews in one English railway carriage. When passengers see a stranger approaching other strangers and firing questions at them out of the blue, they are gripped by such a horror that they look away, where possible move away, and bury their heads in newspapers, or begin an intense study of the advertisement for Whirley Re-usable Containers above the head of the passenger opposite. Had I removed from my folder a pack of dirty postcards, a set of syringes, or some samples of a pornographic video, I think I should have met the same icy detachment from bystanders. In Peru, everyone would have crowded round to see what was going on.

But my question had nothing to do with Peru. To each passenger, I said this: "I'm writing an article for *The Times*. Could I ask you one question? Take a stab at the answer if you think you know it, or tell me if you haven't the least idea..."

Nobody refused to answer. As Labour leader, Neil Kinnock has lost a general election:

- Never
- Once
- Twice
- Three times
- Four times?

Three passengers hadn't the least idea. A Bengali lady told me politely that she knew the answer, but it was for her husband to say. From the 29 who did reply, the result was astonishing.

Statistics, I know, will cavil at my methodology. And of course I realise that this wasn't any old train, but a District Line carriage, passing such places as Mansion House and Temple on its way to Ealing Broadway. Such trains carry a better class of passenger. No doubt the carriage I sampled should be counter-weighted by a carriage on the East London Line conveying C2s from, say, New Cross to Shoreditch.

But I have to report (though here my own judgment intrudes) that it was the people who sounded most like potential Labour voters who most often made the error which is so unhelpful to Mr Kinnock.

And the error? Well, look at the results: Never — 5. Once — 4. Twice — 15. Three times — 3. Four times — 2.

Mr Kinnock has only lost one election. It was Jim Callaghan and Michael Foot who lost the first two. Mr Kinnock has not been leader for all that long, yet in this time has achieved (in the judgment of friends and enemies alike) a remarkable series of personal victories.

But that is not how they saw it in car 17050 on the District Line. The significance of their re-

sponse is not that they clearly didn't have the facts, and were only guessing — most people usually are. It was that the act of guessing uncovered their unconscious disposition towards the man they see him as a loser.

To have fought and lost one general election rebuts the charge that you are a novice. Only when you have lost twice or more can it be argued that you are a loser. Poor Mr K seems to have been propelled, upon the imagination of the electorate, straight from being an untested novice (the second most popular response in car 17050) to being a two-times-or-more loser, without passing through political responsibility on the way. Two-thirds of respondents made that mistake. Only four passengers would permit him to pause on his rightful perch.

I took my questionnaire up to the press cafeteria at the Commons, and tried it on those at my table. Besides myself, there were two distinguished political authors, and journalists, and another parliamentary sketch writer: three people. Two-thirds got it wrong, and said "twice". Perhaps most revealing of all, both these men knew the right answer, and quickly corrected their initial, instinctive, mistake.

In the weeks or months now left, I think Mr Kinnock's instructions should be on no account to fall into another hedge, to stop making jokes altogether, never to grin, to lower the hem of his trousers by a quarter of an inch, and to become a person of very great majesty indeed.

Unions take the temperature

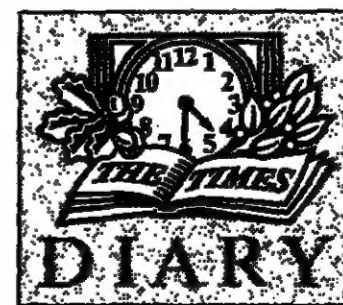
Is Downing Street returning to the days of beer and sandwiches? After more than a decade in the cold, union bosses are wondering if John Major's surprise invitation to the British Medical Association heralds a return to the corridors of power.

The doctors will be only the second group of trade unionists to cross the threshold of No 10 since the 1979 winter of discontent. Mrs Thatcher steadfastly refused to meet the steel workers, miners, nursing and teaching unions, even at the height of disputes with them.

Not that the BMA likes to associate itself with such horny-handed sons of toil as the miners. Although registered as a union, it is not affiliated to the TUC. "I'm not sure our members would like to be lumped in with other unions," says the BMA secretary, Dr Ian Field. "We see ourselves more as a professional association on a par with the Bar Council." Or perhaps the chiefs of the defence staff, the most successful special-interest lobby of the Thatcher years?

The only other trade union visit to No 10 since 1979 was in February 1984, when Len Murray, the TUC general secretary, led delegates from the GCHQ communications centre in Cheltenham after the government banned union membership there. Predictably, the talks broke down after the second meeting. "All she said was no," said Murray.

Nor were Murray and his colleagues offered the beer and sandwiches which had come to symbolise industrial relations under Mrs Thatcher's predecessors, Jim Callaghan, Harold Wilson and Edward Heath. "There might have been a cup of tea, but it was made clear we were lucky to get even that," recalls one veteran. Downing Street is guarded



about details of the forthcoming meeting with the doctors. "We can't speculate on the hospitality to be offered," says a spokesman. "It depends what time of day the meeting is held." But Field is telling his fellow negotiators not to build up their hopes. "All we're expecting is tea or coffee. But if they lay on champagne and caviar, we certainly won't refuse."

Is the writing on the lavatory wall for Tom King at the Ministry of Defence, where the colour of the standard issue loo paper has just been changed? Insiders note that previous changes were followed within weeks by a change of secretary of state. When green paper came in, Sir John Nott's fate was sealed. When it was changed to pink, Michael Heseltine walked out over the Westland affair. In came white, and out went George Younger. The new paper is described by one MoD mole as "a washed-out bluish grey". What can it mean?

Desirable at times

When offered a peerage, the academic R.H. Tawney is said to have asked the Labour prime minister, Clement Attlee: "What have I ever done to the Labour party to deserve this?" Today's socialists have no such problems. "I am proud of the title, and I shall use it with pride," says Meghnad Desai, one of Labour's five new working peers.

In his professional life, however, the economics don intends to remain plain Professor Desai. "That is the proper title, because it denotes a qualification you have to work for," he says. The switchboard at the London School of Economics will be instructed accordingly. Nor will Desai use the title for his writing. This includes a regular column in *Tribune*, whose latest front-page headline reads: "Time to get rid of the Lords".

Desai admits that the temptation to use the title is strong. If only to avoid the frequent misspellings of his first name. But the use of such handles can also lead to confusion. Before his elevation Desai was asked to telephone Lord Graham of Edmonton. "I thought he was a West Indian cricketer. In the Caribbean they love using such titles as first names." Instead it was the Labour chief whip in the Lords, sounding him out, on Neil Kinnock's behalf, about accepting the peerage.

Warp factor 1

At the moment Washington disclosed this week that the Soviets are building a new radar station near Komsomolsk in the nation's far east, the people of the town had other things on their minds. They had just spent the evening waiting for the Martians to land.

I can't promise political asylum



Farewell New York

When he took over the New York *Daily News* in March, Robert Maxwell pronounced himself an honorary citizen of the Big Apple. He had complete faith in the city's future. He said, unlike all those timorous corporations scurrying across the Hudson river, driven out by the financial crisis and social breakdown. And he slapped "Forward with New York" in bold letters beneath the masthead of the *News*. Yesterday, the rival New York *Post* gleefully reported that as a cost-cutting measure, Captain Bob is shipping the headquarters of Macmillan, his American publishing empire, out of its 31-storey building on Third Avenue, Manhattan, to Greenwich, Connecticut. "Forward with Greenwich?"

Back in Dublin after helping to organise European Community relief for Kurdish refugees in Iran, EC official Denis Kennedy says aid is now getting through — though hardly to the EC team. Frustrated by the inadequacies of the Iranian telephone system, it asked for a satellite telephone. In response, and at enormous expense, Brussels flew in 15 large crates containing photocopiers, desktop calculators, electronic typewriters and computers. Everything, in fact, but the phone link.



CITIZENS WITH TEETH

Citizenship is defined as "the position or status of being a citizen, with its rights and privileges". Since the Enlightenment it has been a commonplace of political thought. Why has this well-worn concept undergone such a revival in Britain over the past year, to the point where the prime minister, John Major, made a "citizens' charter" the centrepiece of last night's speech to the Scottish Tories? Is it election year waffle?

There are two answers, one flattering to national self-esteem, the other less so. The first is that Britons in their wisdom have recognised a distortion in the individualistic emphasis of 1980s Thatcherism. All three parties are redressing that imbalance by tempering enlightened self-interest with public-spirited altruism. Left and right converge in the language of citizenship. Such buzzwords as "empowerment", "charters", "contracts" abound on both sides.

A more pessimistic interpretation is that the British are aching for a quiet life after a decade of hard work. Modish talk of citizenship is no more than a substitute for pursuing the rigorous application of market mechanisms to public and private monopolies, if necessary by privatisation but in all cases by forcing choices on consumers. On this view, citizenship charters are simply ways of avoiding further painful reform to corners of the public sector that have proved invulnerable to Thatcherism.

Even after the unveiling of Mr Major's charter, the jury is still out on what the practical impact of the new model citizen might be on municipal authorities, nationalised industries or private monopolies. There is not even agreement on who invented citizens' charters. Both Labour and the Liberal Democrats claim paternity. The left's preoccupation with civil liberties may give it a strong claim, but its equal preoccupation with public-sector union "rights" undermines its credibility.

Labour's much-vaunted "customer contracts", an innovation of the Labour-run York City Council, are largely toothless. The customer who complains about litter is promised only that "we'll deal promptly and efficiently with the problem". Similarly,

Islington council's well-publicised "service guarantee" offers citizens no sanction beyond the "right" to complain to their councillor. The onus is on the citizen to make a fuss. Few do so.

Much has been made of the "Quality Commission", with which Labour promises to replace the Audit Commission. But it looks very like an attempt to turn the tables on Tory councils, which frequently provide fewer but cheaper services than Labour ones, by demanding that councils publish standards of service and pay compensation if these are not met. The strict accounting discipline which the Audit Commission has applied to local and central government finance has been unpopular with Labour authorities, and it is doubtful whether the new body would do that job as well.

The interpretation of citizenship which is now emerging from the circle of advisers around John Major is altogether more radical. Safeguards devised to protect customers of privatised industries and utilities will now be introduced into the public sector, and market conditions simulated.

In the health service, the inclusion of new "jobplans" in doctors' contracts and the higher standards that will be demanded by the GPs and health authorities from the hospitals under the internal market should lead to real improvements for outpatients. Incentives for council employees in areas like house maintenance and refuse collection will be combined with new rights to enable citizens to force the authorities to respond to their needs. Refunds for poor service, already pioneered by British Telecom, would be extended to embrace other monopolies such as British Rail.

All this is admirable, but all this is not enough. Where market mechanisms, competition and privatisation cannot penetrate, such surrogates as these offer the best chance of improving performance. But this strategy does not free Mr Major's government from an obligation to pursue those policies which lay at the heart of Thatcherism, namely to extend the realm ruled over by free consumer choice, and to use market incentives to ensure its efficient operation.

A BEAM IN INDIA'S EYE

India, the world's largest democracy, also leads the world in indignant condemnation of such abuses of human rights as apartheid in South Africa. Horrendous *de facto* apartheid exists in India, a social oppression responsible for the vicious caste wars which, in the run-up to this month's general election, have erupted in Bihar. Challenged, India's politicians reply that caste discrimination, like child labour, is outlawed by the state. They will have more difficulty in shrugging off the "rampant human rights abuses" in Punjab chronicled by Amnesty International this week.

The Amnesty report, coupled with the testimony collected by Asia Watch on torture and extra-judicial killings in Kashmir, puts a chilling perspective on India's international moralising. Since the early 1980s, when armed Sikh separatists began demanding an independent "Khalistan", tens of thousands have been detained for months or years without trial, many have been tortured or have "disappeared" and hundreds more have been gunned down by police in staged "encounters". Detainees are held under an anti-terrorist act, condemned as "completely unacceptable" by the UN human rights committee, which allows detention without charge for up to a year.

In both states, as Amnesty and Asia Watch acknowledge, Indian federalism is under acute stress from separatist militants. These groups have also behaved abominably, kidnapping, assassinating and conducting random attacks on crowded civilian targets such as marketplaces. Convictions are difficult to obtain by judges and magistrates under threat of assassination. That does not excuse lawlessness and indiscipline by the state. Since Punjab came under direct rule from Delhi in 1987, the conduct of the police and paramilitary bodies has been that of a medieval occupying force, corrupt, venal and cruel. Changes to the criminal code have rendered them effectively immune from prosecution.

The likelihood, particularly if the May 20-26 elections produce no clear majority, is that Delhi will respond to the Amnesty report with its usual mix of defensiveness towards the outside world and procrastination in curbing abuses which the Indian press has protested against as forthrightly as Amnesty. The double standards displayed abroad by too many Indian politicians and diplomats should not, however, be taken to mean that Indians do not deplore the cruelties which mar their proud democracy, or that brave judges and magistrates do not challenge the government.

The current election campaign is more than usually scarred by violence, with the rise of Hindu fundamentalism pitting Muslims and Hindus against each other more bitterly than at any time since 1947. The survival of secular government, vital to civil peace and pluralistic tolerance in this subcontinent of many races and religions, is in doubt. That is the context against which human rights abuses in India must be set, and in which many domestic civil rights groups campaign against child labour and other kinds of exploitation.

In the last resort, Indian democracy works. Checks do operate, as Mrs Gandhi discovered when the electorate delivered its verdict on her nationwide state of emergency. The worst scandals do get voted out of office. But in the struggle to hold India together, respect for minorities, which is indispensable to the success of that endeavour, is on the wane. Punjab has always been a cruel, violent place, but government action is fanning the flames. Amnesty has pointed to some of the ways out of this vicious escalation of bloodshed. Successive Indian governments have barred Amnesty from Punjab. The next would do better to take its recommendations seriously, review all cases of detention without charge, bring the security forces sharply to heel and change the terrorism law.

PERPETUAL COMMOTION

Argument over the future government of Northern Ireland is foundering in a row over where the argument should take place. Sigmund Freud would have called it displacement activity. Seamus Mallon, MP, claimed yesterday that everyone would look "very silly" if they flew to somewhere outside Ireland to argue. But why wait for that when the parties look so silly already?

The nationalists want the talks to take place on the island of Ireland, north or south, but will not countenance London. The unionists refuse to meet in Ireland alone, and state that, having thought deeply about the dilemma and while agreeing that the overwhelming burden of historical precedence and logistical suitability weighs in favour of London, they are willing to consider other options: a hodgepodge of neutral locations, transitional meetings and alternations between London and Dublin. The little Alliance party is perfectly prepared to talk to anybody anywhere, which explains its continuing lack of electoral appeal.

If it were not for the Rev Ian Paisley's religious sensitivities, Peter Brooke, the Northern Ireland secretary, could do worse than pack them all off to Rome. There, the Vatican has long experience of forcing argumentative politicians into decisions. In 1241, after the death of Pope Gregory IX, the college of cardinals, deeply divided about

the best successor, were imprisoned in the Septizonium Palace together with the coffin of their late Pope. Their food was rationed and conditions made as uncomfortable as possible to speed their choice. When a cardinal lay down to sleep, a soldier would stick a spear into his mattress. Within two months, they reached a compromise: a cardinal so old that he died after three weeks.

Perhaps Beirut would thus concentrate the collective minds of Ulster, or Belgrade for a taste of impending civil war? If territorial symbolism is really so important, why not send them up in an aeroplane and let them circle over Irish and British airspace? Inflight refuelling would have to be ruled out to force a deadline on the garrulous men. The present allowance of £35 a session to each participant would have to decline, eventually becoming a rising fine for each additional session.

Alternatively, each party could go to its favourite spot and talk to Mr Brooke on a conference call line from its carphone. The paramilitaries could monitor the proceedings, leak them to the press, and cut in with suggestions of what would or would not put a stop to the "men of violence". One thing is for sure. If nobody can agree on where to talk, what rich scope for disagreement must lie in the choice of food, drink and language, not to mention agenda.

Labour's plans for education

From Mr James Pawsey, MP for Rugby and Kenilworth (Conservative)

Sir, Your report (May 7) that a future Labour government would stop schools opting out of local authority control "on the day Labour came to power" tells only half the story.

The other half was indicated as long ago as last October by Mr Stephen Byers, the Labour leader of the Association of Metropolitan Authorities, and a Labour parliamentary candidate. Addressing a fringe meeting at the Labour conference, Mr Byers stated that there would be many local education authorities "which will be extremely reluctant to employ people, especially head teachers and deputies, who have clearly embraced... opting out".

This implies that were Labour returned and grant-maintained schools once more under local authority control, teaching staff would be sacked.

Would Jack Straw and a Labour government really agree to a witch-hunt by Labour local authorities? Already there are ominous signs.

For example, Kirkcaldy Council refused to acknowledge the existence of Castle Hill grant-maintained school after it opted out of its control, and a Labour councillor in Brent said that it was the borough's duty to try to "strangle" any school which went grant-maintained.

The attitude of the Labour candidate for Finchley — a former teacher — is illuminating: according to your own report (March 1), she would "rather clean lavatories than work in a grant-maintained school".

At the local level the Labour party behaves more and more like a school bully, determined to get its own way. At the national level Jack Straw's comments, that "the larger the number [of grant-maintained schools] the more urgent it will be to restore some sensible planning to finance and education", gives the same away.

No mention anywhere of children, parents, schools or choice. Clearly he thinks that only he knows what is best for the nation's children, and that parental ballots that have taken place are irrelevant.

Yours faithfully,
JAMES PAWSEY (Chairman, Conservative Backbench Education Committee),
House of Commons,
May 8.

Ulster talks venue

From Mr Colin Laurie McKelvie

Sir, It may be tempting to interpret the disagreement over the venue for the Ulster talks (report, May 7) as merely an excuse for non-participation on the part of one or more factions. But the geographical context of these talks is significant.

It would be bizarre for a British secretary of state and the elected representatives of a province of the United Kingdom to agree to meet and discuss the political future of that province with representatives of an independent sovereign state which, in a primary article of its constitution, has consistently laid claim to territorial jurisdiction over that part of the United Kingdom since 1935.

Such talks can best take place outside the island of Ireland, and thus well away from what might variously be perceived as either the country of an alien state or the occupied and unliberated portion of the Irish national territory. And if, as is not unlikely, the representatives of the Dublin government went to feel themselves at a disadvantage talking in London, other alternatives might suit everyone. Switzerland suggests itself, or perhaps Sweden or Finland.

But whatever the venue, it is manifestly unrealistic to suppose that any solution will emerge from within the context of the present Anglo-Irish Agreement, whereby London and Dublin have illogically contrived to agree not only that the constitutional integrity of Northern Ireland as part of the United Kingdom should be unassailable, but also that the territorial claims of article 2 of the constitution of the Irish Republic should stand. This is a doomed attempt to bridge a vast constitutional gulf.

I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,
COLIN LAURIE MCKELVIE,
Tundergarth House,
Lockhart,
Dumfriesshire,
May 7.

Health issues

From Professor J. F. Goodwin

Sir, Your leader, "Doctoring the targets" (April 26), includes the comment that "there is no pressure group representing those now apparently fit who will die of kidney failure or heart attacks in ten years' time".

While "pressure group" may or may not be an appropriate term, your readers may be assured that there are a number of voluntary organisations dedicated to advising the public, industry and government on the ways to reduce the risks of coronary heart disease.

Points unresolved on war crimes bill

From Lord Belfrage, FBA

Sir, Lord Shawcross's letter (May 4) contains some errors. The Parliament acts do not distinguish between types of legislation and in 1911 the doctrine of a "mandate" from the people was unknown. The House of Commons is thus fully entitled to use the machinery of the acts when the House of Lords has twice rejected a bill it has sent up to it.

Whether the war crimes bill is "wretched" or not must be a matter of opinion. In so far as the bill has weaknesses, that is the fault of Lord Shawcross and his associates. Lord Bridge of Harwich, backed by two other eminent law lords, proposed that the bill be given a second reading, and amended afterwards to provide further safeguards for the defendants in such trial as might result.

It was indicated by the Leader of the House (report, May 2) that at least one of these amendments, the most important one, to allow the trial judge to call off the trial if he thought the opportunities for the defence were inadequate, would probably be acceptable to the government and the House of Commons. By refusing to give the bill a second reading Lord Shawcross and his friends made amendment impossible.

Lord Shawcross refers to the bill having been passed by only a minority of the House of Commons, but an even smaller minority of the House of Lords took part in its debates on the bill. Should that be held to cast doubt on the validity of its vote? In British parliamentary practice issues are determined by those present and voting. Nothing prevented any member of the House of Commons sharing Lord Shawcross's views from turning up and voting against the measure on any of the six occasions when they had the chance.

Yours sincerely,
BELFRAGE,
House of Lords,
May 4.

From the Chief Rabbi

Sir, The views of a jurist as eminent and experienced as Lord Shawcross obviously command respect. But why impugn the integrity of those who hold, contrary to him, that the pursuit of the most elementary justice for heinous mass-murders can have no limits of time, place or nationality?

Both in his recent House of Lords speech and in his letter to *The Times* he refers to the "powerful Wiesenthal Institute". "Powerful" in this context can only insinuate some improper or undue influence, compromising the merits of their case.

I, for one, can state quite categorically that the men of the Wiesenthal Center (though long known to me personally) have at no time had any contact or discussion with me on war crimes legislation.

Yours sincerely,
JAKOBOVITS,
Adler House,
Tavistock Square, WCI,
May 6.

From Mr Greville Janner, QC, MP for Leicester West (Labour)

Sir, Lord Shawcross has an odd view of the democratic process. It is true that some five years ago the Wiesenthal Institute produced the first list of alleged war criminals living in the UK. It is also true that the proponents of the war crimes bill have throughout maintained that if, but only if, there is sufficient evidence that individuals on that or other lists were personally involved in mass murder they should be brought to justice. But to allege that only the Wiesenthal Institute provided "the mandate" for the bill is ridiculous and, in my view, offensive.

The reality is that the institute, along with the vast majority of Jewish organisations and people who were lucky enough to survive the Holocaust, certainly do support the bill. But it was primarily the robust efforts of a series of home secretaries and of the All-Party Parliamentary War Crimes Group that ensured its eventual passage.

Every survey of public opinion has shown that the British people want justice to be done.

Yours faithfully,
GREVILLE JANNER (Secretary, All-Party Parliamentary War Crimes Group),
House of Commons,
May 4.

Dangerous dogs

From Mr L. D. Skingley

Sir, As a coroner and a solicitor, I have dealt with many cases over the years where attacks by dogs (report, May 9) have caused severe injury, disfigurement and even death. There is no doubt that the problem is getting worse.

I suggest the following:

1. Ownership of dogs must be a matter of registration, an essential ingredient to accountability.
2. Certain breeds of dog should only be kept and/or bred under a licensing system which could attach conditions conducive to public safety.
3. Reform of the criminal and civil law to provide simplicity and certainty. If a dog causes injury the registered owner should be guilty of an offence, leaving the courts with powers to deal with each case on its merits. With regard to civil law, the concept of negligence should be abandoned so that a registered owner is liable for any injury caused.

In this way a much more responsible attitude will be encouraged which should, in turn, lead to fewer

tragedies than one sees at the moment.

Yours faithfully,
L. D. SKINGLEY,
161 High Street, Tonbridge, Kent.

From Mr W. Roger Wallis

Sir, Society rightly accepts that motor vehicles and firearms should only be available to those who are fit to have them. Would it not be perfectly acceptable in a free society to identify those breeds of dog that were potentially dangerous and have a licensing system for those who wish to own them?

Such a system could take account of not only the qualities and motives of the potential owner but also of other factors such as the locality in which the animal was to be kept. It would have the merit of being readily enforceable by the police. It could be self-financing to some degree by the imposition of a licence fee which would act, in addition, as a deterrent to all but the serious dog lover.

Yours faithfully,
W. R. WALLIS,
The Old Vicarage,
Hackthorn, Lincoln.

Drawbacks of two-sided bat

From Mr J. A. B. Mayes

Sir, I feel that the new double-faced cricket bat (report, May 9) has many more implications than have so far been thrown up in your columns: I shall mention only three.

As captain of a cricket club at a level which sees a sweep shot played roughly once in a decade, I feel the more likely use of the new bat will be the invention of a whole range of new strokes for which a complete new set of books on field placing will have to be written.

I particularly foresee the backward swipe bringing an end to wicketkeepers standing up to the wicket — and an attendant difficulty in finding volunteers to field in the slips.

I would also be grateful for advice on how it will be possible for an umpire to decide whether a batsman using such a device is batting left or right-handed. A right-handed batsman will be able, at the moment of delivery, to spin through 180 degrees to adopt a left-handed stance — thereby making the standard field of two slips and a gully illegal. I can see my non-turning leg spin contributing as many as 100 balls to our opponents' score as the wickets they have come to expect.

And where will it all end? Why only two faces, when a bat of square cross-section could offer four? Am I alone in my vision of a future with slip fielders wearing helmets, running frantically from side to side behind a pivoting batsman wielding a fencepost?

Yours sincerely,
JOHN MAYES (Captain, Brasted Invicta Cricket Club),
5 Farm Lane, Tonbridge, Kent,
May 9.

Diminishing assets

From Mr John D. H. Soper

Sir, My late grandfather owned assets in Wei-hai-wei, north China, comprising two hotels of 60 rooms and 40 rooms respectively, a bakery, a mineral water production plant, two post offices, coal merchant's and market gardener's businesses, stores and an 80-foot steam launch. These had a present-day value well in excess of £2 million and were the subject of a compensation claim in terms of a deal negotiated between the Foreign Office and the Chinese.

This claim — after 14 years in the hands of the Foreign Office, with my file of papers a foot thick — was valued in August 1990 at just over £20,000, of which 62% per cent has actually been paid: 52% per cent of 1 per cent!

The Foreign Office resembles a certain Edinburgh solicitor of whom it used to be said: "I'd far rather have him against me than for me."

I feel that the people of Hong Kong have good reason for alarm and despondency.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN D. H. SOPER,
10 Jessfield Terrace,
Edinburgh 6,
May 10.

Thatcher and home

From Mrs Patricia Duce

Sir, Mrs Thatcher's revealing comment in a recent interview (report, May 9), that "Home is where you come to when you have nothing better to do", must have sent shockwaves through many a heart of the country's potential and actual home-makers and parents.

Maybe she was referring to her own situation and not implying a general truth as she sees it. One sincerely hopes so. True, some of us may have turned our homes into cafes by day and parking places by night. But that is not true of countless close-knit families.

A different assessment by the famous Scot, Henry Drummond, comes to mind: "Strength of character may be acquired at work but beauty of character is learned at home."

I am among those who think that taking this to heart would not only affect our own country's welfare, it would equip us better to play our part in the world.

Yours faithfully,
PATRICIA DUCE,
Flat C, 10 The Mount,
St Leonard's-on-Sea,
East Sussex.

Zoo transformation

From Mr R. J. French

Sir, The London Zoo's future could be assured by following London Transport's example. In Piccadilly Underground station the public are herded through one-way gates and down the escalators to the platforms. In contrast, the wildlife runs free in wells, doubly protected from the spectators by the height of the platform and a live rail.

To prevent excessive loitering by the public, trains arrive regularly, bringing a curtain down on the performing mice but without disturbing them, and remove the passive audience. The spectators' platform is thus left free for the next group to arrive.

If the animals were similarly released to roam free within the perimeter of the zoo, the public could be carried to and despatched from viewing platforms in railed cages with the minimum of disturbance to the animals.

Yours faithfully,
R. J. FRENCH,
The Athenaeum, Pall Mall, SW1,
May 5.

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From Mrs Patricia Duce

Sir, Mrs Thatcher's revealing comment in a recent interview (report, May 9), that "Home is where you come to when you have nothing better to do", must have sent shockwaves through many a heart of the country's potential and actual home-makers and parents.

Maybe she was referring to her own situation and not implying a general truth as she sees it. One sincerely hopes so. True, some of us may have turned our homes into cafes by day and parking places by night. But that is not true of countless close-knit families.

A different assessment by the famous Scot, Henry Drummond, comes to mind: "Strength of character may be acquired at work but beauty of character is learned at home."

I am among those who think that taking this to heart would not only affect our own country's welfare, it would equip us better to play our part in the world.

Yours faithfully,
PATRICIA DUCE,
Flat C, 10 The Mount,
St Leonard's-on-Sea,
East Sussex.

Zoo transformation

From Mr R. J. French

Sir, The London Zoo's future could be assured by following London Transport's example. In Piccadilly Underground station the public are herded through one-way gates and down the escalators to the platforms. In contrast, the wildlife runs free in wells, doubly protected from the spectators by the height of the platform and a live rail.

To prevent excessive loitering by the public, trains arrive regularly, bringing a curtain down on the performing mice but without disturbing them, and remove the passive audience. The spectators' platform is thus left free for the next group to arrive.

If the animals were similarly released to roam free within the perimeter of the zoo, the public could be carried to and despatched from viewing platforms in railed cages with the minimum of disturbance to the animals.

Yours faithfully,
R. J. FRENCH,
The Athenaeum, Pall Mall, SW1,
May 5.

Weekend Money letters, page 34



ATH BIRMINGHAM BOURNEMOUTH BRIGHTON BRISTOL BROMLEY CAMBRIDGE CANTERBURY CARDIFF CHELMSFORD CHELTENHAM CHESTER CROYDON EDINBURGH EXETER GLASGOW GUILDFORD HARROGATE HATFIELD

مكتبة الامم

MITAT'S BACK



COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
May 10: The Duchess of York today visited Hampshire and was received by Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant for Hampshire (Lieutenant Colonel Sir James Scott, Bt).

Her Royal Highness this morning opened the Hart Leisure Centre in Fleet.

The Duchess of York then opened the Hart Shopping Centre in Fleet.

Her Royal Highness, Patron of the Winchester Cathedral Trust, this evening viewed an exhibition of pictures in aid of the Winchester Cathedral Appeal at Crawley Manor, Crawley.

The Duchess of York, Patron of the Winchester Cathedral Trust, later attended a concert given by the Band of the Irish Guards in the Great Hall, Winchester.

Captain Alexander Baillie-Hamilton was in attendance.

This morning The Princess Royal, Patron, The Butler Trust, visited HM Prison Grendon, Spring Hill, Grendon Underwood, Aylesbury and was received by Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant for Buckinghamshire (Commander the Hon John Freeman).

Afterwards Her Royal Highness visited The Griffin Society's hostel for women at Stockdale House and Kelley House, Camden.

Subsequently The Princess Royal visited Whitelands College, West Hill, London, SW15.

The Countess of Lichfield was in attendance.

This evening Her Royal Highness, President, The Missions to Seamen, attended a Dinner at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich.

Mrs Timothy Holderness-Roddam was in attendance.

KENSINGTON PALACE
May 10: The Princess Margaret, Countess of Snowdon, Colonel-in-Chief XV/DX The King's Royal Hussars, today received Lieutenant Colonel Christopher Bradshaw on assuming his appointment as Commanding Officer of the Regiment.

Her Royal Highness, President, The Girl Guides Association, was present this afternoon at a Reception given at Buckhurst Park, Withyham, for members of the Sussex East Trefal Guild.

KENSINGTON PALACE
May 10: Princess Alice, Duchess of Gloucester this morning opened the extension to St Edmunds Hospital and Nursing Home, Bury St Edmunds and was received by Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant for Suffolk (Sir Joshua Rowley, Bt).

Mrs Michael Harvey was in attendance.

The Duchess of Gloucester, Patron, Medical Women's Federation, was present this evening at the Annual Spring Meeting at the Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh, Scotland.

Her Royal Highness was received by Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant for the City of Edinburgh (Mrs Eleanor McLaughlin, the Rt Hon the Lord Provost).

Mrs Euan McQuoad was in attendance.

YORK HOUSE
ST JAMES'S PALACE
May 10: The Duke of Kent this morning opened the Basing House Gardens, Basingstoke, and was received on arrival by General Sir David Fraser (Vice-Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire).

His Royal Highness later opened the refurbished Basingstoke Canal at Frimley Lodge Park, Frimley and was received upon arrival by Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant for Surrey (Mr Richard Thornton).

The Duke, Vice-Chairman of the British Overseas Trade Board, this afternoon visited F. C. Brown Limited, Basingstoke and Vision Engineering, Sand, Surrey.

Commander Roger Walker, RN was in attendance.

The Duchess of Kent, Colonel-in-Chief 4th/7th Royal Dragoon Guards, today received Lieutenant Colonel C. J. G. T. Wainwright on his appointment as Commanding Officer of the Regiment.

Brigadier R. J. Baddeley, Colonel of the Regiment.

Weekend royal engagements

TODAY: The Duke of York will judge the police horse class at the Royal Windsor Horse Show at 6.00.

The Princess Royal, as Patron of the Special Injuries Association, will present prizes at the national final of the Heinz Schools Marathon relay at Alexander Stadium, Birmingham, at 12.30; and, as Colonel-in-Chief of the Royal Corps of Signals, will attend the 35 Signal Regiment (Volunteers) regimental tattoo at Drayton Manor Fun Park, Tamworth, at 3.05.

TOMORROW: The Princess of Wales will take the salute at the Combined Cavalry "Old Comrades" annual parade and memorial service in Hyde Park at 11.05; and will attend the Red Cross "Simple Truth" concert at Wembley Arena at 8.00, in aid of Kurdish Refugees.

Prince Edward, as Chairman of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Special Projects Group, will visit the Longleat balloon fiesta at Longleat House at 12.30; and will attend the Stars Organisation for Spastics "Number One" awards at the BBC Television Centre, Wood Lane, at 8.00.

Princess Alexandra will attend a gala performance at the Theatre Royal, Haymarket, at 7.25, in aid of the Richmond Theatre Trust (Surrey).

University news

Kent
The first Michael Ramsey professor of theology at Kent is to be Robin Gill, the William Leach professorial fellow in applied Christian theology at Newcastle University.

The Ramsey chair has been founded through an appeal initiated by Lambeth Palace, to commemorate the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Ramsey of Canterbury, who died in 1988.

City
Honorary degrees are to be conferred on the following:
Doctor of Science: Miss Winifred Hector, nurse and author; Professor Manfred Thoma, professor of control engineering, Hanover University (Mr Ivan Yates, deputy chief executive (engineering), British Aerospace, Professor Peter Checkland, professor of systems, Lancaster University).

Princess of Music Mr Peter Gabriel, musician, Master of Arts Mr Malcolm Campbell, business librarian, City of London Libraries.

Professor Sir Lawrence Gowing
A memorial meeting to celebrate the life of Professor Sir Lawrence Gowing, CBE, RA, will be held at University College London in the Chemistry Auditorium, Christopher Ingham Buildings, Gordon Street, London, WC1, on Tuesday, June 11, 1991, at 4.00 pm. Tickets by application to The Director of Administrative Services, University College London, Gower Street, London, WC1E 6BT.

Turners' Company
The following have been elected officers of the Turners' Company for the ensuing year: Master, Mr M. Simmonds; Upward Warden, Mr E.W. Sawney; Downward Warden, Mr P.F.W. Venn.

Miss Linda Cawsey and Mr Mark Chapman to be members of the Police Complaints Authority.

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OBITUARIES

RUDOLF SERKIN



Rudolf Serkin, the American pianist of Austrian birth, died in Vermont on May 8 aged 88. He was born at Eger in Bohemia on March 28, 1903.

RUDOLF Serkin was one of the leading exponents of the Austro-German classics this century. He played Bach, Mozart, Beethoven and Brahms with the unvarnished strength and probing articulation that totally eschewed extraneous show - apart from the involuntary grunts and occasional clattering of his heels that became his trademark. A masterful interpreter of concertos, he was equally adept in chamber music, which he loved to play with his colleagues and friends. Above all he was one of the most profound of 20th century pianists, on the level of Schnabel. He often sacrificed merely beautiful tone in pursuit of musical truth as he saw and heard it. He could box the compass of tone between the delicacy of touch needed in Mozart and the lionine exploits called for in Brahms's D minor Concerto, in which he was supreme. An inveterate investigator of less familiar repertory, he championed the concertos of Mendelssohn and Max Reger, the piano music of Dvorák and the neglected Burlesque of Richard Strauss.

He was the son of a none-too-successful singer and a businessman, who was determined that the young boy, showing his talent when he was only four, should have a chance to develop it. So the whole family moved from Bohemia to Vienna with that end in mind. Serkin studied at the Vienna Music Academy with Richard Robert for piano and Marx and Schoenberg for composition. Indeed he averred that Schoenberg and the whole avant-garde milieu in Vienna at that time exerted a deep influence on his

upbringing. His debut came in 1915 at a concert with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra.

The next great influence on Serkin was the violinist Adolf Busch. A chance meeting with him in Berlin led to a duo partnership of many years standing. They played the Sonata of Busoni (another pianist) to the ailing composer who said that Serkin's style was too clean and transparent - he should dirty it a bit. Serkin took due note of the advice. Busch and Serkin recorded sonatas together before the war and also the fifth Brandenburg Concerto, in which Serkin's playing is truly phenomenal. At this period Serkin was also indebted to Schnabel and to Sir Donald Tovey, the musicologist, who widened the young pianist's horizons. In 1926, with darkening political clouds in Germany, he and Busch moved to Basel, where Serkin married the violinist's daughter Irene. From then until the war he divided his time between Switzerland and the United States, where his reputation was quickly established after

his debut with the New York Philharmonic under Toscanini in 1936. He made his home in Philadelphia in 1939 and taught at the Curtis Institute there, becoming its director in 1969. In 1950 Busch founded the Marlboro Festival and after his death in 1952 Serkin took over its direction. It was and is a small but distinctive gathering at which young musicians learn about chamber music from hearing the great ones play in various combinations.

Although he confessed he hated recording, he leaves behind a considerable legacy of performances, many of them just re-issued on CD by Sony Classical, successor to American Columbia. His readings, in the company of such luminaries as Szell (the two Brahms Concertos - superb), Bernstein (the Beethoven Concertos), Ormandy, Casals (a regular at Marlboro) and the Budapest Quartet, have stood the test of time. So, even more, have his pre-war records, not least the Brahms Piano Quintet with the Bechstein Quartet. In more recent times he performed Albeniz and the LSO in Mozart Concertos on record following memorable concerts of the same works at the Barbican (Serkin always enjoyed his visits to Britain for the innate musicianship of players here). But perhaps his most notable legacy is his recordings of sonatas by Beethoven and Schubert in which he seemed to commune personally with each composer in turn.

His various qualities of sincerity, intelligence, technical strength and soul made him a paragon amongst pianists, one to whom innumerable younger players looked up with reverence - as did his admiring audiences. His son Peter is also a noted pianist.

VICTORIA GILMOUR

The Hon Mrs Victoria Gilmour, OBE, former lady-in-waiting to the Queen Mother, has died aged 89. She was born on October 22, 1901.

VICTORIA Gilmour was appointed OBE for her service as lady-in-waiting to the Queen Mother, then Duchess of York, on the royal tour of Australia and New Zealand in 1927. She remained a life-long friend. She was awarded the Territorial Decoration for her role in the Auxiliary Territorial Service, which she had joined in 1938. She became controller in 1944.

Victoria Gilmour was the mother of Sir Ian Gilmour, Bt, former proprietor of *The Spectator* and Conservative politician. She was the youngest of five daughters of Viscount

Chelms, heir to the 5th Earl Cadogan, his father. But he died in 1908 and never succeeded to the earldom. Victoria Laura Cadogan, as she then was, married John Gilmour, of the Grenadier Guards, and had a son and daughter before they were divorced in 1929.

A friend writes:

THE death of Toria Gilmour leaves a hole in the lives of a great many people. She had lived, in the fullest sense of the word, for nearly 90 years and never stopped making friends all along the way.

She was born into an exceptionally privileged position, at a time when that term meant a great deal, and her long life was lived in close contact with

men and women of much power and influence. But she was free from the slightest taint of snobishness, her interest and affection encompassing people from every kind of background and walk of life. She was, to the end, exceedingly intelligent and quick-witted, keeping herself constantly informed about current events, the arts, sports and the people involved with them. She had firm opinions and expressed them with a nice combination of vigour and fun.

Above all she was a most marvellous friend. When she had taken you to her heart she was with you through thick and thin. She set, and herself adhered to, the highest standards; and yet she was the reverse of priggish. She was a

serious person; but she was possessed of an unflinching, if sometimes rather waspish, sense of humour. And she had an enormous courage, which enabled her to rise above times of great personal sadness, as well as some serious physical setbacks, and also to journey through the declining months and weeks of her life with a good humour which was none the less notable for being laced with bouts of spiciness about her own incapacities.

Her departure leaves a great hole in our lives. But it leaves also, for very many people, old and young, the most wonderful and happy memories.

Anniversaries

Today
BIRTH: Reginald Pole, Archbishop of Canterbury 1556-98; Stourton Castle, Staffordshire, 1500; Jules-Hardouin Mansard, architect, Marly-le-Roi, 1708; David Hamilton, architect, Glasgow, 1768; Irving Berlin, composer, New York, 1888; Martha Graham, dancer, Allegheny, Pennsylvania, 1894; Salvador Dalí, painter, Spain, 1904.

DEATHS: Matteo Ricci, Jesuit missionary, China, 1610; William Pitt the Elder, 1st Earl of Chatham, prime minister 1766-61, 1766-68; Hayes, Kent, 1778; Spencer Perceval, prime minister 1809-12, assassinated in the House of Commons, 1812; Tom Cribb, champion of the prize ring, London, 1848; Sir John Herschel, astronomer, Collingwood, Kent, 1871; Juan Gris, Cubist, Boulogne, 1927; Edward Thompson, explorer in South America, Plainfield, New Jersey, 1935; E.A.R. (Kim) Philby, British spy, Moscow, 1988.

Tomorrow
BIRTHS: John Bell, surgeon, Edinburgh, 1763; Edward Lear, artist and poet, London, 1812; Florence Nightingale, Florence, 1820; Dante Gabriel Rossetti, poet and painter, founder member of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, London, 1828; Jules Massenet, composer, Montauban, France, 1842; Gabriel Fauré, composer, Paris, France, 1845.

DEATHS: Thomas Wentworth, 1st Earl of Strafford, statesman, executed, London, 1641; August von Schlegel, poet, Bonn, 1845; Sir Charles Barry, architect of the Gothic revival, London, 1860; Bedřich Smetana, composer, Prague, 1884; Joris Karl Huysmans, novelist, Paris, 1907; Amy Lowell, poet, Brookline, Massachusetts, 1925; Josef Fluski, president of Poland 1918-22, prime minister 1926-28, 1930, Warsaw, 1935; John Massfield, poet Laureate 1930-67, near Abingdon, Oxfordshire, 1967.

The coronation of George VI and Queen Elizabeth, 1937.

Service luncheon
4th British Division (1939-45)
General Sir Geoffrey Munnison presided at the annual reunion luncheon of the 4th British Division (1939-45) held yesterday at the New Connaught Rooms.

Mr C.N. Pagnon Heron and Dr S. Palmer.
The engagement is announced between Christopher, elder son of the late Major Anthony Heron and of Mrs Norma Heron, of Portsmouth, and Sharon, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs Michael Palmer, of Mayfield, East Sussex.

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Forthcoming marriages

Mr S.D. Neil and Miss F.C. Kernick.
The engagement is announced between Shayne, eldest son of Mr and Mrs David Neil, of Raglan, New Zealand, and Fiona, daughter of Mr and Mrs Malcolm Kernick, of St Margaret's Bay, Kent.

Mr S.A. Corbett and Mrs D.E.A. McPherson.
The engagement is announced between Sebastian, only son of the Hon Joseph and the Hon Mrs Corbett, and Doran, only daughter of the late Mr Alan Leary and of Mrs Leary.

Mr D.E. Dawson and Miss C.R. Hobhouse.
The engagement is announced between David, younger son of Mr and Mrs R.G. Dawson, of Leamington, Surrey, and Corinna, youngest daughter of Mr and Mrs R.H. Hobhouse, of Newry, County.

Mr E.W. Foster and Miss A.L. Charles.
The engagement is announced between John, son of Mr and Mrs William Foster, of Bodmin, Cornwall, and Alice, daughter of Mr and Mrs David Charles, of Falmouth, Cornwall.

Mr L.W. Gale and Miss S.E. Barry.
The engagement is announced between John, son of Mr and Mrs George Gale, of Richmond, Surrey, and Sarah, eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs Patrick Barry, of Seal, Kent.

Mr D.G.R. Gooding and Miss R.C. Hinde.
The engagement is announced between David, son of Dr D. Gooding, Oxford, and Mr M. Gooding, Kirkcaldy, and Claire, eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs H. Hinde, Bloxham.

Mr M.J. Lohs and Miss R.J. Martin.
The engagement is announced between Matthew, son of Mr and Mrs John Lohs, and Rachel, daughter of Mrs Pat Martin and the late Mr William Martin.

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Church news

The Rev Canon Richard Gerrard, Canon Residentiary and Diocesan Adviser for Clergy Training, diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, has been appointed Archdeacon of Sudbury, diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich.

Other appointments
The Rev Gordon Anderson, Assistant Canon, has been appointed Canon of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich.

The Rev Canon R. Bailey, Vicar, St George's Church, London, has been appointed Canon of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich.

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Dinners

Barbers' Company
Sir Allan Dower, Lord Mayor *locum tenens*, and Lady Dower, accompanied by Mr Sheriff and Mrs John Taylor, attended a ladies' dinner at the Barbers' Company held last night at Barber-Surgeons' Hall, Mr A.W. Levin, Master, presided, assisted by Sir William St John Upper Warden, Sir Gerard Vaughan, MP, Middle Warden, and Mr R.J. Cline, Renter Warden. The Lord Mayor *locum tenens*, the Middle Warden, Mr Alderman L.J. Chalmers and Professor Lesley Rice also spoke. The Masters of the Ironmongers' and Cutlers' Companies and their ladies were among the guests.

West County Constabulary
Mr P.L. Condon, Chief Constable of Kent, and Mrs Condon received the guests at the annual ladies' night dinner of the Kent County Constabulary Service Officers' Mess held last night at Brompton Barracks, Chatham. Mr J. Threlknap, American Legal Attaché, and Mrs Threlknap were the principal guests.

First Gurkha Rifles
The Nepalese Ambassador and Mrs Simha were the guests of honour at the annual dinner of the First Gurkha Rifles Regimental Association held last night at the RCT Hotel, Brigadier J.E. Heals presided.

1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards
Lieutenant-General Sir Maurice Johnston, Colonel of the 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards, presided at the annual dinner held last night at the Cavalry and Guards Club.

Royal Corps of Transport
Major-General D.B.H. Colley, President of the Institution of the Royal Corps of Transport, presided at the annual dinner held last night at the RCT HQ Officers' Mess, Aldershot. Lord Foot, Sir Robert Reid and Mr J.M. Stewart were among the principal guests.

RAF Upavon
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LEONARD MATHER

Leonard Charles Mather, CBE, former vice-chairman of Midland Bank, died on May 8, aged 81. He was born on October 10, 1909.

LEONARD Mather was prominent in the City of London in a period which spanned the onset of increased competition among the clearing banks and the 1974 secondary banking crisis. He rose from a humble background to a position where his opinion was sought by the highest financial authorities.

That he was not honoured beyond a CBE in 1978 probably reflects his unassuming personality and the conventions of the day, rather than lack of achievement.

Mather was born in Liverpool, where he began as a clerk in Midland's Dale Street branch in 1926 after leaving Oldershaw School, Wallasey, at the age of 15. But nine years later he was transferred to the general manager's department at the London head office until the end of the second world war. During this period he underwent seven years of correspondence courses, whereby he obtained a bachelor of commerce degree at London University and qualified as a member of the Institute of Bankers and the Chartered Institute of Secretaries. In 1945 Mather was appointed manager of the bank's Bolton branch, in what was to be his last direct taste of branch banking.

Farmer's diary: Paul Heiney

Rubbing hams with the nobility

HANGING in a dark Suffolk outhouse, over a smouldering fire, is my very first ham. Every day that it absorbs the pungent, preserving flavour of the oak smoke takes me one day nearer to a farming dream fulfilled.

Farmers and countrymen of the old school, of which I am a disciple, knew the value of bacon and ham. Cobbett wrote: "A couple of hitches are worth fifty thousand Methodist sermons." They are great softeners of temper and promoters of domestic harmony. At the moment, a little good temper and domestic harmony would fit in quite well to our farming scene. I am furious that the much-needed rain has turned out to be carried by arctic winds, which are preventing any spring growth: it is making me bad-tempered. The domestic disharmony stems from my smouldering glumness, which is casting a pall over the household. We are living, as it were, in an emotional smokehouse. A good ham tea is what we need. If that fails, we'll try the Methodist sermons.

The idea of curing a ham has been in my mind ever since the first litter of pigs was born, and so when they were sent to be butchered I asked for one leg to be left whole and on the bone. I then set about the traumatic process of learning to cure it. Curing is a preserving process, achieved by liberal use of salt and made subtle by the addition of spices, herbs, or more powerful flavourings such as beer and treacle. But how?

My collection of aged books has much to say on curing, but they cannot dissociate it from the less savoury aspects of extracting food from the carcass of a pig. I remember a fine description of the technique required to scrub clean the entire outside of the pig's intestine and then, by inserting a stick (specially designed for the job) into one end of it and executing a kind of Wimbledon backhand-flip, to have the colon snaking around the room and turning itself inside out. You could then scrub the insides clean. Not the sort of thing for a modern little farmhouse with Laura Ashley curtains. I wanted something simpler.

My answer came by accident from a remaindered book in a bin on a railway station bookstall. It

confirmed my suspicion that the old methods of curing required much greater applications of salt than would be acceptable these days. It made for long-lasting bacon but may well have shortened the lives of those who ate it.

I settled for a "Suffolk sweet cure". I took a black plastic dustbin and sterilised it; I gave it sugar, black treacle, sea salt, saltpepper and topped it up with six pints of foaming Suffolk ale. Like a sailor going to the watery grave of his dreams, the pig's leg slid gently into it. And there it stayed for six intoxicating weeks. I stirred it, and sniffed it, and hauled it out for an occasional inspection, with the family standing round respectfully. When the book said its time was up, I took it round to our local smokehouse. This is no ordinary smokehouse. It lies behind a small shop in a village not far from here and might be thought an undistinguished establishment, were it not for a royal crest above the door. From these humble premises, hams for the Queen Mother's table are smoked and cured. We are rubbing, if not shouldering, then at least hams, with the nobility.

When the ham comes home and the first slice is tasted I shall report fully, but I can say with some confidence that it is likely to be superb, for although our ham is as yet untried, we have been eating and selling our own pork for some time. Palates jaded for years by bland chainstore pork have suddenly revitalised at the taste of ours. Cooks who have tried every dodge to get watery mass-produced pork to crackle when cooked, find that ours bubbles and browns to a juicy crunchiness. I could go on, but as I am not in a position to offer you all a taste it would be unfair.

Modern farming boasts of its yields, its economy, its success in breeding animals to streamlined commercial shapes. It sells its meat not on flavour but on the virtues of leanness and tenderness and tidy packaging, as if the standard of perfection in food was a fish finger. No wonder there is so little soft-tempered domestic harmony around these days, and so many evangelical sermons instead. William Cobbett and I, and the Queen Mother, we know better.



A sense of creatures all around

Fay Weldon remembers when the cars waiting outside the railway station near her home in Somerset used to consist of a smattering of 2CVs, a little truck and a few battered vehicles bearing CND stickers.

Sixteen years on, they have been replaced by chauffeur-driven BMWs with Green party stickers, the result of the insidious blurring between country and town. "I'm not sure of the division any more," admits Mrs Weldon, the writer. "What we are all living in is one big suburb now. Towns simply overflow into the country."

She and her husband, Roy, an artist and jazz trumpeter, originally bought the house near Shepton Mallet to satisfy Mr Weldon's newly-discovered passion for growing things. Now they grow vegetables on their three acres of land and keep Soay sheep, chickens, ducks and geese.

In one of the short stories in her new book, *Moon Over Minneapolis* — her 25th — Mrs Weldon describes chickens as "adorable", ducks as "really witty" and geese as "silly but brave. And all multiply." The Weldons solve that particular problem by eating them — if the fox does not do so first. This year it took seven of their 11 lambs.

"We take the lambs down to the local abattoir and they come back as joints of meat," Mrs Weldon, aged 59, says. "Vegetarians may deplore it but it's the same old argument: they either exist for seven to eight happy months, leaping around and having a lovely time, or they don't exist at all. The welfare of one requires the death of another."

She and her husband are not, however, self-sufficient, because "in August you can't give the beans away and who wants to eat flabby green beans from the freezer in March?" They share the shopping. "He gets what he thinks we eat and I get what I think we eat. He thinks we live entirely on health food. I understand that is what we ought to live on but we tend to eat other things as well."

Despite the pleasure she gets from country life with a "sense of creatures all around, all of which have these extraordinarily subtle relationships with one another and with you", she still lives in London for much of the week in her end-of-terrace Victorian house in Kentish Town. She used to live in the house next door which now belongs to her sons, Nick, aged 35, and Daniel, 27. Her third son, Tom, 20, is in nearby Islington, while 13-year-old Sam remains in Somerset with his father.

"You can, in theory, write anywhere," Mrs Weldon says,



Settling in: Fay Weldon estimates that it takes 15 years to be accepted by country people, "and then they feel it's all right to be horrid to you"

"but, in practice, you need a London base because London is where things in publishing and television happen. If you are in the country you just can't do the things you need to do sufficiently efficiently. How do you get done the things you have to do and write the things you need to write if you're on a train all the time? So you develop a kind of compromise and end up shuttling between the two."

The country house, on a site mentioned in the Domesday Book, has been added to over the centuries. It has stunning views over the rolling hills which Mrs Weldon finds soothing rather than inspirational. The rooms run into one another — "my husband takes down doors rather rapidly and knocks holes in walls".

The enormous navy blue bathroom first attracted her to the house ("I thought it was absolutely wonderful") and she likes to read in the big corner bath. The house

has stone flagged floors covered with rugs, an oil-fired Aga, open fires and wood stoves. Everywhere there are books — many of them her own — and her husband's paintings. He paints and practices his trumpet in his attic studio, which is crammed with canvases.

Mrs Weldon writes wherever the mood takes her, frequently at the kitchen table, preferably in bed. "I write with my hand so I don't need a power plug. Mornings are best: it's nearer your dreams, really. If I could manage not to get up in the morning, I could get a lot done. The minute you get dressed, you've had it." Whenever and wherever the muse strikes, she responds, occasionally scribbling on the back of shopping lists with an eyebrow pencil.

She finds that returning to London after three days in the country "I practically have to put on new clothes from head to foot,

because in the country personal appearance is of no import". Despite her attempts to maintain two separate wardrobes, her clothes tend to congregate in one house. "Knickers in particular always end up all in one place. I can't work out why it is."

In the country, the Weldons are currently engaged in what she describes as a "neighbourhood feud". Their new neighbours "have a belief about the country that they must instantly put up fences and mark things 'private' and they don't understand that if you live in the country you have to co-operate because animals stray, because there's a snow storm, because your water supply is their water supply. You have to get on."

"Life is very different in the country. People are very different. You can't ring up the painter and say 'come and paint the house and I'll pay you'. That's much too simple. It's a matter of his pride and yours and, in a way, it's much

more gracious and human. But I don't think I ever had any belief that country living was a solution to any personal problem."

She estimates that "it takes 15 years to be accepted" by country people "and then they feel it's all right to be horrid to you". When she became involved with the local campaign to prevent the building of a warehouse on an ancient burial site, she became "very popular with some people and very unpopular with others and, on the whole, you get unpopular with the people you like best."

She believes that she could live anywhere "within reason, but when it comes to it you're not a cuckoo who can fly from nest to nest. I could live in a hotel for three days and enjoy it. After four days I go into panic mode and I can just stand ten days of having every minute of it."

SALLY BROMPTON

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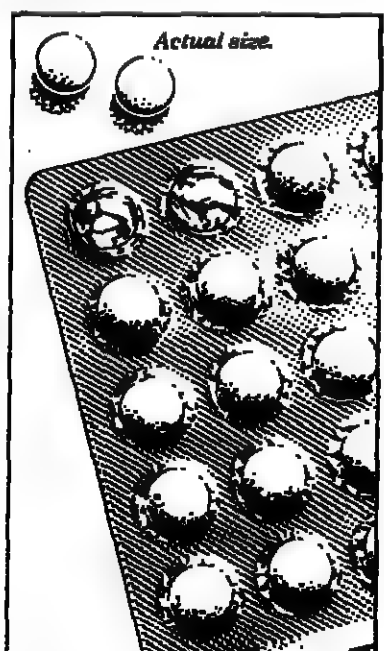


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Feather report

One for sorrow, two for theft

SOMETIMES it is hard not to take sides. A pair of mistle thrushes nest just over the fence from my garden. Time and again, the peacefully competitive fluting of two or three neighbouring blackbirds is interrupted by the furious, football-rattle voice of the enraged mistle thrush.

When the alarm call reaches that kind of intensity, I know there is a battle to watch. A pause in the frantic mistle-thrush call, and I hear the cynical, rattling chuckle that has become such a familiar sound across the country.

Maggies. Once again, the local rascals have launched a twin-pronged assault on the mistle-thrush nest: and the mistle thrushes are, as ever, fighting back with all they have. Magpies are about four times bigger, but the mistles have a deeply committed have-a-go mentality.

Against all odds, I have seen a magpie fly across the garden in his city-slicker's regalia, with a mistle thrush no more than a couple of inches behind him, the football-rattle call sounding more like a roar of defiance than a call of anxiety. "Go for him!" I say. "Get stuck in! See him off!"

Scientific detachment is all very well, but one would be less than human if one failed to cheer the mistles. The magpies have persecuted them quite mercilessly, and yet they still have a nest to defend. They have not been defeated. They are touchingly, heartily defiant.

People worry dreadfully about magpies. The magpie population has grown and grown in recent years. Since



Jacques

Co-responder bird: the thieving magpie, on the increase

1966, magpie numbers on farmland have doubled, while in woodland the population has more than trebled, mostly because of the decline of gamekeeping.

THE rise in magpie numbers is the single greatest concern of most people. Magpies are thumpingly obvious birds, in their garish co-responder livery. They look like villains, and their robbing of the nests of songbirds is a deeply unsavoury habit, something that has upset and worried people all over the country.

The RSPB gets more letters on magpies than on any other subject. When they set up a

stall at an agricultural show they are always inundated with magpie questions. People foresee a world without the fluting of blackbirds, a world in which the only sound heard in the garden across the land is the evil chuckling of the black-and-white nest burglar.

Magpies are an emotional subject. But they are being investigated with appropriate dispassionate scientific enquiry in a joint project involving Sheffield University and the British Trust for Ornithology.

Magpie densities and rates of increase vary. So what has happened in the areas where there are most magpies? These

just happen to be the areas in

which the songbird population has risen most steeply over the past 20-odd years. "It appears that conditions which favour magpies also favour songbirds," says Tom Birkhead, of Sheffield University. Both new fieldwork and the study of years of census and nest record figures reveal the same thing: that magpies have not adversely affected songbird numbers at all.

MAGPIES unquestionably prey on nests. They are obvious birds, they look utterly villainous, and it is impossible to suppress an emotional reaction to their robberies. I am still rooting for the mistles. We like goodies and baddies, and magpies have been cast for all time as baddies.

But we can do better than that. If we want real villains, real destroyers of bird populations, forget magpies. Turn instead to developers of heathland and estuary, gill net fishers, peat sellers, drainers of wetland, and all those in positions of power who believe that short-term profit is a more worthwhile goal than long-term conservation. Compared to such people, magpies are angels of mercy.

SIMON BARNES

● What's about: Birders — dotted on a passage from northern Africa to breeding grounds in Cairngorms and Grampians. Twickers — lawn-pit at Elmley, Kent; short-toed lark at Tyten Harger, Hertfordshire; black-winged stilt at Coxall, Staffordshire. Details from Birdline, 0898 70022.

Country events

THIS WEEKEND

■ **Falconry displays:** Demonstrations of training and exercise of birds of prey plus talks on the history of hunting, different breeds and their conservation.

Castle Rising, Norfolk: tomorrow from 2pm (information, 0553 631330). **Richmond Castle, North Yorkshire:** also tomorrow from 2pm (information, 0478 2493). Adult £2, child £1.

■ **Horse trial:** One-day British Horse Society trial with dressage, showjumping and cross country events. Gardens open to the public.

Charterhall, near Greenlaw, Duns, Scottish Borders: Today 10am-5.30pm, £5 per car.

■ **Fire engine and air show:** Two hundred fire appliances on display from a vintage 1730 manual pump to the latest Mercedes Benz engines. Displays of firefighting and rescue techniques, grand parade and a 90-minute flying display. **Duxford Airfield.**

Cambridgeshire (0223 833963): Tomorrow from 10am; £6, child £3.

■ **Teddy bears' picnic:** Winnie the Pooh and Eeyore, treasure hunt, disco, magic shows and local radio roadshow. Picnic boxes on sale. **Wellington Country Park, Riseley, near Reading, Berkshire (0734 326444):** Tomorrow 11am-5pm; £2.50, child with teddy free.

■ **NEKT WEEK:** RBS gardening events: Workshop on climbers and wall plants at Rosemoor

Garden, Great Torrington, north Devon: Wednesday 2pm (information, 0803 24067). Also on wildflower meadows at Pershore College of Horticulture, Worcester-shire, Wednesday, 10.30am-4pm (information, 0386 554609).

■ **Devon county show:** Live-stock, arena events, trade stands and children's entertainment. **Westpoint, near Exeter (0392 444777):** Thurs-Sat. First day £8, child £4; Sat £5, child £1.50.

JUDY FROSHAUG

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Mudchute, an everyday story of city folk

Heather Kirby negotiates the skyscrapers of London's Docklands to find the farm spending half a million pounds on riding stables

Down on the farm, in the heart of east London's Docklands, they are spending £617,400 building new riding stables. It is an ambitious project but Mudchute Farm, so named because silt was sucked up from the bed of the Thames and dumped through a chute over 32 acres of wasteland, inspires the kind of dedication which regards a hurdle as a challenge.

The farm, behind a giant Asda supermarket, blocks of council flats, office developments and Millwall Park, may be nothing to write to Ambridge about yet but when the 3,500 newly planted maple, ash, oak and sycamore trees establish themselves, it will be. But for the towering bulk of Canary Wharf, the tallest building in Britain, the illusion that this corner of the Isle of Dogs is deep in the heart of the countryside would be complete.

In the meantime there is, in one field, the artistic equivalent of a haystack: a piece of sculpture fashioned by Yugoslav Gligor Stefanov out of hay and suspended on something reminiscent of the sails of a windmill. It may not last forever, though, because Gazza keeps eating it. Gazza is a llama who was given to Mudchute by one of the local pubs. He is also causing problems for the sheepdog, which thinks he is another member of the flock, if a bit on the big side, and keeps trying to round him up. The sheepdog is called Beattie and was donated by British Telecom. This is no common or garden inner-city farm.

The Mudchute Association is an alliance between the local community and the big businesses which moved into its territory, forces which, in the not too distant past, made headlines for being at odds. The president of the association is Ted Johns, a 58-year-old former dockworker. The treasurer is another former dockworker, George Pyle, and for the last two years Dr Michael Barnack, a Conservative MP, Dr David Owen at St Thomas's hospital, and now a local resident, has been the association's chairman.

The London Docklands Development Corporation (LDDC) is contributing 75 per cent (£463,000) of the cost of the new stable block, which will open in August and will incorporate a cafe, offices and possibly a warden's house. The number of horses is to increase from four to nine, at a cost of about £1,200 each, and there are to be five ponies.

Mr Johns says there is some disquiet about the proposed changes for horse riding on the Mudchute which his association may have to monitor. "When they built the Docklands sailing centre the prices were so high local people could not afford to pay them, so what we call the yellow

schools to participate in Mudchute's nature study centre. In spite of a broken foot, the result of a near fatal road accident, he strides about the farm scattering statistics about how cost-effective it is to run (£440 an acre a year) and how many visitors they get (15,000 a year), and praising the fight local people put up to save their precious speck of green space.

"Manhattan is being built here and this is its Central Park," he says, with a sweep of his crutches over an area that could truthfully be swallowed up in a corner of its American counterpart. But he is forgivingly biased. "No one can measure what effect it has on youngsters to be brought up in a concrete wilderness, and I believe places like this can have a profoundly civilising effect. And, where once land like this was in the gift of kings and princes, this was fought for by local people and they cherish it all the more for that."

Teachers from the seven neighbouring schools, as well as some further afield, are encouraged to bring their classes to study for the new national curriculum science and biology subjects. Children do maths work by measuring the girth of a sow, and charting her growth curves. They learn how to milk goats and take home the products of their labour - yogurt.

While Mudchute claims to be the largest city farm in Europe, there are more than 60 others in Britain, and next week they will be celebrating the tenth anniversary of the foundation of the National Federation of City Farms. All are run by a few permanent staff, helped by local volunteers, and most were created from reclaimed derelict land. They usually have livestock, grow vegetables and flowers, herbs and fruit, and most go out of their way to create facilities for people with learning difficulties and the physically handicapped. They evolved out of a desire on the part of ordinary people to alleviate the

wellie brigade took over," he says. "We will need to watch that they don't take over here, swanning around with their hard hats and jodhpurs. But the yuppie element with their Filofaxes have been and gone. Now we have middle class residents who are getting involved, and they care about the Mudchute as much as we do."

The association has deliberately adopted a policy of refusing requests for livery at the stables because they want the horses and ponies to be available at all times for everyone. Off-peak riding sessions will start at £5 an hour for association members, rising to £9 for non-members. Anyone can join the association, although there is a reduced membership charge for people who live in the area.

Dr Barnack believes a mix of support, economic and social, is vital if Mudchute Farm is to prosper. He is leading his considerable energy and enthusiasm to fund-raising among local businesses and trying to get local

'Where once land like this was in the gift of kings and princes, this was fought for by local people and they cherish it all the more'



Riding high: a trot through Mudchute Farm, in the shadow of the Canary Wharf development

decline of their urban environment. Mr Johns, who was born on the Isle of Dogs, is a typical convert. "During the first world war the Mudchute used to be allotments; dug for victory and all that. Then it was derelict for years, then they tried to build houses on it and then we eventually got to own it ourselves, after a battle, so it has a bit of a history. Well, we had a youth worker who had been

brought up on a farm and he wanted to bring in some sheep. I thought, living in the city, kids and even adults would either turn them into pets and feed them buns and crisps until they burst or they would chase them to death. But that didn't happen. In fact, it was amazing, particularly the kids. Within a short period of time we had Jacob sheep, lambs and kids all playing in the same field, all at peace with each other.

"With this riding it is the same. I am amazed at how big horses are with their bloody great teeth and iron feet but the kids take to them. Not me though. You would need a carthorse before you would get me on one but I like the idea of riding over the Mudchute. I think it must be my John Wayne complex."

Further information on city farms from Avon Environmental Centre, Junction Road, Brington, Bristol BS4 3JP (0272 719109)

Events in town

THIS WEEKEND

□ Gardeners' open day: Demonstrations, displays and a plant clinic. *Houghall Agricultural College, Durham. Tomorrow. 1-6pm; 50p, accompanied child free; car £2.*

□ National Canine Defence League centenary dogathon: Dog show and sponsored walk - all monies raised to go towards building a fourteenth rescue centre. Pedigree and novelty dog show from 10am (all dogs eligible), walk from 1pm. Also, agility and flyball displays, and grooming demonstrations. Celebrity walkers include Lisa Goddard, Pam St Clement and Loyd Grossman. *Regent's College, Inner Circle, Regent's Park, NW1.*



Dogathon: sponsor a poodle

□ May fairs and puppet festival: Punch and Judy professors and puppeteers from all over Britain perform throughout the day. Grand procession from 10.30am, church service 11.30. Workshops, folk dancers, music, clowns, jugglers and donkey rides. *St Paul's church garden, Bedford Street, Covent Garden, WC2, tomorrow; free.*

□ Richmond May fair: Old-fashioned fair celebrating the event's 21st birthday. Stalls, side shows and family entertainment. *Richmond Green, Richmond, Surrey. Today 10am-5pm; free.*

□ Cathedral festival: Week of concerts, midday and evening, exhibitions and fringe events. *Chelmsford Cathedral, Chelmsford, Essex. Today until May 18. Information and booking on 0243 495028.*

□ Living crafts: Hundreds of different crafts exhibited and demonstrated. Traditional English entertainment, including clog dancing and Punch and Judy shows. *Hayfield House, Hayfield, Hertfordshire. Today, tomorrow 10am-6pm; £4.50, child £2. Entrance to house, £1.75, child £1.10. Information on 07072 62823.*

NEXT WEEK

□ Stiles classics Exhibition featuring designs in fashion and furniture, textiles and tableware. *University of Essex, Colchester. Wed until Jun 5. Further information on 0206 873261.*

JUDY FROSHAUG

Pictures worth walking on

Assets

THE contemporary equivalent of Sixties-style stripped pine flooring is paint. Unlike other types of floor-covering, painted floors can be customised to suit any taste, while new types of lacquer make them hard-wearing. Paint is particularly effective in sprucing up a tired wooden floor, and smooth concrete surfaces can also be transformed.

Thomas Lane, a decorative artist, says painted floors require much greater design input and colour consideration than the decorative techniques used for walls.

"I don't think many people are aware of the design possibilities presented by a painted wooden floor. I would love to use vivid colours but clients tend to choose 'woody' colours, black or reddish-mahogany," Mr Lane says. "They tend to think along conventional lines, stencilled borders, for example, rather than strong geometric motifs. But an exposed surface looks far more exotic when decorated boldly."

Mr Lane's portfolio includes a *parquet Versailles* look for a French couple's bathroom floor, and a pine floor bleached blue, Scandinavian-style, with linear border motif for an Edwardian living room.

The designs are tailor-made or adapted from motifs Mr Lane has already used successfully. "The floor retains a woody feel as I use translucent or semi-opaque colours through which the grain appears. The decorative effect looks more like marquetry or inlay than paint."

He hand-mixes clear varnish with artists' oils and paints freehand or cuts a stencil for repeated motifs. "It is very important to lacquer over the paint - about three coats. Then the surface is really tough, even in humid areas such as bathrooms and conservatories. Nor do modern lacquers turn an unpleasant yellow like polyurethane varnish."

To sand, paint and seal a floor measuring 13ft x 16ft (about 22 sq m) using a basic design, Mr Lane charges about £825. A 16ft x 20ft area (about 30 sq m), with a more complex design and border, costs about £1,425.



Focus: Susanna Wornell and Rachel Dilworth painted a photographer's floor in medieval style



Upstairs, downstairs: some of Thomas Lane's work in a hall

Artists Susanna Wornell and Rachel Dilworth agree that it is largely due to the development of modern, durable varnishes that painted floors are becoming more popular. Their work ranges from small vignettes to large-scale murals on wooden or concrete surfaces, varying from the geometrical patterns of antique Dutch tiling to more detailed figurative paintings. A recent commission for a photographer's studio floor gave them the opportunity to paint a medieval-style, camera-clicking maiden.

STEVE BOHM, who specialises in paint effects for walls and floors, was asked to paint a concrete kitchen floor in the style of York flagstones, and two musicians commis-

sioned a stencilled floor with cello and French horn motif for their living room. Colleen Bery paints or stencils geometric designs and other motifs on to medium-density fibreboard (MDF) floor tiles, wooden boards or sisal. Depending on the design's complexity, she charges about £25 a sq ft for painting floorboards, around £35 a sq ft for sisal, and from £40-£90 a sq ft for floor tiles.

Now she is specialising in painted floorcloths, which were popular in 18th century Europe and America. "The biggest advantage is that you can roll them up and take them with you when you move," she says. "They are made of heavy-duty, washable canvas and the more they are used the better they become -

rather antique-looking." The floorcloths are colour-washed, hand-painted and finished with several coats of wax or varnish. Those with linen backings are suitable for both carpeted and wood floors.

CLIENTS can choose from 20 standard designs or commission their own concept. Ms Bery will also match fabric swatches to co-ordinate floorcloths with other furnishings. Prices start from £195 for a 5ft x 3ft floorcloth. Wornell and Dilworth also paint floorcloths in a wide range of designs.

TO conquer the problem of painting new wooden flooring which needs to settle first, Ms Bery has developed floor tiles which do not shrink, warp or expand. Their ash, oak or mahogany veneer is bonded to a core of MDF cut into 40cm squares, with bevelled ends to prevent fraying. The tiles are colour-washed and tinted to any tone. After a cellulose seal, they are covered with lacquer. Prices start from £5 each for plain colour-wash; £8 for a marbled design, or £8-£12 for a stencilled design on colour-washed base.

NICOLE SWENGLEY

□ Thomas Lane, 57 Wellington Row, E2 7BB (071-729 6195). Steve Bohm, 64 Richmond Road, New Barnet, Herts. EN5 1SE (081-441 1746). Robert and Colleen Bery Designs, 157 St John's Hill, SW11 (071-924 2197). Wornell & Dilworth, 174 Camden Road, NW1 9BJ (071-482 6093).

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This is an important announcement to owners of Zanussi Dishwashers. Our continuous Quality Control Programme has revealed the slight risk of the wiring loom breaking within the door of some of the Dishwashers we made during 1985, 1986 and 1987. In very isolated circumstances this could cause overheating of the wires. In view of this, Zanussi want to check these Dishwashers and, where appropriate, fit an additional SAFETY FEATURE. This service will be free of charge. We have already made contact with a large sector of our customers who are affected by this notice and, through this advertisement, we hope to contact the remainder. If you have recently acted on a letter from us on this matter, then please ignore this notice. The Dishwashers we want to check can be identified by certain numbers on two silver adhesive labels fixed to them, and the model number. One of the silver labels is at the top of the stainless steel front of the dishwasher, visible when you open the door. The other label is outside, at the back, as shown in the illustration below. The model number is on the control panel on the upper part of the door. Take this notice to your dishwasher and follow the instructions for completion of the coupon. We thank you for your co-operation in this matter and apologise for any inconvenience caused.

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Model D. _____ Prod. M. _____

Model D. _____ Prod. M. _____

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Model D. _____ Prod. M. _____

MODEL NUMBER _____

- Select a label, from those illustrated on the coupon, which has the same groups of prefix letters on it as one of the silver labels on your dishwasher.
- Copy the numbers off the silver label onto the one selected, against the same prefix letters. You need only record the details from one label, whichever is easier to gain access to.
- Now, if the number you've put in the shaded area of the illustrated label begins with 85, 86 or simply 7, your dishwasher is one we need to check and you must fill in the rest of the coupon as described in the following paragraphs. If the numbers in the shaded areas start in some other way, you may discard this coupon now and continue to use your dishwasher as usual.
- Copy the model number from the control panel on the upper part of the door into the box provided on the coupon.
- Add details of your name, address and, very important, your postcode, to the coupon, together with your daytime phone number. Cut along the dotted line and put the coupon in an envelope. Seal it and post it to us, right away, at the address shown below. No stamp is needed.
- If your dishwasher is one we need to check, it should not be left unattended when it's ON or left to operate overnight until our engineer has visited you. It should also be UNPLUGGED or switched OFF when it's finished, as we suggest in your instruction book.

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Intrigue spices New York

Impressionist sales are still in trouble, but there is some action in contemporary art, Sarah Jane Checkland reports

The crowds are still applauding the contemporary and Impressionist sales in New York, less from amazement at the prices than through relief that anything is selling. The first season of auctions since the collapse of art's two most speculative fields revealed last week that Impressionism is still in deep trouble from the absence of the Japanese, while contemporary art is again shifting, albeit at a reduced rate.

Rumour and gossip as usual were rife. In the contemporary art field, the artist Jeff Koons, darling of collectors in the Eighties, particularly Charles Saatchi, and flush from selling his "sculptures" consisting of consumer durables such as footballs and Disney characters, is being sued for alleged copyright infringement by United Features Syndicate. The syndicate claims that he "appropriated" without authorisation the likeness of Odie the Dog from its comic strip "Garfield" for his work *Wild Boy and Puppy*. In a separate suit, the photographer Art Rogers objects to his image of a couple holding a litter of puppies becoming the basis of Koons's *String of Puppies*.

Unlike Andy Warhol, who settled a similar issue out of court, the flamboyant Koons says he welcomes the legal action, in order to thrash out the whole issue of "appropriation", which, it can be argued, is a thread running through art since time immemorial.

There was considerable speculation surrounding Mr Saatchi when it leaked out that about 30 works in Sotheby's main contemporary sale - mainly of the Minimalist and Neo-expressionist movements - were being sold from his collection. After a decade as collector-hero, snapping up contemporary art fresh from the studio, the British advertising tycoon's image took something of a beating last year when it was discovered he had been discreetly disposing wholesale of works by

certain artists. There were accusations of speculation, bordering on a trade in contemporary art.

Sales this time round at Christie's and Sotheby's went passably well. Christie's achieved \$11.02 million (\$6.3 million) for the 53 works in its main sale, with a 75 per cent success rate; Sotheby's raised \$12.3 million for 68 works, with 82 per cent sold. Both auction houses noted strong American buying.

Top price of all, at Sotheby's, was \$7.26 million (\$4.3 million) paid for Robert Rauschenberg's painting *Rebus*, sold by a creditor of a company owned by the Swedish property millionaire Hans Thulin, who bought the painting amid a furor of world publicity for \$6.3 million in 1988. A New York dealer, Larry Gagosian, a frequent supplier to Mr Saatchi, was the bidder, but he could have been representing another client. Had Mr Saatchi spent so much on *Rebus*, it was argued, he would have cancelled out the benefit of selling 24 out of the 32 works he offered. Sotheby's refuses to comment.

The prices for some artists continued their downward spiral. Willem de Kooning had reached the giddy height of \$20.7 million in November 1989 for his painting *Interchange*, while his *July*, a painting of similar size and of the same period, fetched only \$3.8 million last November. This time around, his *Woman with Window II*, admittedly an inferior painting, failed to meet its estimate of \$800,000-\$900,000, staying instead at \$525,000.

In contrast, Warhol and Lichtenstein, who were slammed by the market last November, were back in business. Warhol's *Two-Foot Flower*, a silk-screen on canvas image of a bulb flower, fetched \$110,000 (estimate \$70,000 to \$90,000), while his *Li*, a silk-screen print of Elizabeth Taylor, failed to reach its \$500,000 lower estimate, but did sell for \$380,000. Lichtenstein's *Razzmatazz* sold for \$1.65 million



A contemporary success story: *Wild Boy and Puppy* by Jeff Koons, whose prices are rising despite lawsuits

against an estimate of \$800,000-\$1.2 million. There was also good news for a clutch of younger artists, including Koons, whose record rose from \$27,500 to an astonishing \$137,500 (estimate \$100,000-\$150,000) with the sale of four vacuum cleaners in a display case lit by fluorescent lights.

British artists also stood firm. *Standing State Circle* by Richard Long doubling its estimate at \$148,500. *Dead Boards No 15*, an early Gilbert and George work, outstripped its estimate at \$57,750.

As for the Impressionist sales, the

gossip focused on the movements of the Japanese who had, until last November, sustained this market. Their decision followed a flurry of scandals involving high finance and the art market, and only the most intrepid showed up this time. More than one third of works at Sotheby's failed to sell. A third sold under the estimate, seven lots sold within estimate and five over.

Three out of five late two of three paintings by that Japanese favourite, Chagall, at \$4.51 million, the top lot, Henri Matisse's *La Robe*

Persane, was below expectation. There was no sign of activity from Jo Nehmad, the international dealer believed to have stepped in to support the market following the poor results of the Henry Ford II Impressionists in New York last November. What buying there was, was dominated by private collectors from Europe and the United States.

Dealers such as Julian Agnew, of London, put the figures down to lack of quality goods rather than lack of interest.

The tale was similar at Christie's, where the meagre offering of truly Impressionist works had been padded out with Surrealist and a mixed lot. Top price was \$2.2 million for René Magritte's *Les Barricades Mystérieuses* (estimate up to \$1.6 million), while Monet's *Antibes*, a luminous coast scene which last year would have had the bidders competing, sold below its estimate for \$1 million.

Whether the Impressionist market will ever recover its stride, or if it is destined to be an intriguing chapter in socio-economic history, remains to be seen.

Cars zoom, but not sales

Review

Chickadee: The fastest moving classic cars this week were three Ferraris and a Maserati stolen from Brockley Hall near Welwyn, Hertfordshire. Lord Brockley, who has 40 such classics, believes the cars had been stolen to order for quick sale. Meanwhile, the Monaco car auction season was experiencing a distinct lull. Although Christie's issued a sunny statement, its success rate was only 64 per cent. Brooks sold only 36 per cent, while Sotheby's sold a mere 20 per cent. Top price for Christie's was \$2,442,000 (\$243,467) for a Ferrari 275 GTB. At Sotheby's a Chevrolet Bugatti 328 Type 7 raised \$158,000. Best performer at Brooks was a 1958 Formula 1 Maserati 250F which sold for \$596,000.

Stripped down: The world's first nude photograph caught a chill at Sotheby's when the 1850 image of an awkwardly posed woman went for \$560 to a private collector. Top price was \$9,020, paid for a half-dressed subject, *Standing Nude Figure*, by Julien Vallou de Villeneuve.

Top Test: A rare hump-backed red-jointed Scotty dog fetched £11,770 (estimate £10,000-£15,000) at Sotheby's toy sale.

Preview

Today: Bonhams offers costumes from more than 40 different television showings of *Dr Who* over the past ten years, and monsters including Daleks, Cybermen and Veroids at 2pm. At the same time, Phillips West Two offers cars and car mascots.

Tuesday-Saturday: West of England Fair being held at the Assembly Rooms, Bath (0225 463727). From Wednesday to Saturday, there is decorative antiquities fair at the Pavilion, Bath (0277 362662).

Tuesday: Christie's sale of orders and medals includes those of the late Sir Frederick Ashton and a rare Prussian Red Eagle awarded to the Khedive of Egypt, Abbas II. **Friday:** Koller Wilhelm II in 1914 (up to £20,000). **Monday:** At 10.30am and 2pm, Sotheby's Sussex has a sale of Edwardian paintings and watercolours.

Tuesday and Wednesday: Studio and modern ceramics, including work by the local favourite son, Bernard Leach, at 11am.



6.63

Friday: Mahler's manuscript of his last work, the 10th Symphony, complete with what are thought to be ten staves, are estimated at up to £400,000 at Sotheby's. **Bonhams, Montpelier Street, London SW7** (071-584 9161). **Phillips West Two, Salem Road, W2** (071-229 9090). **Christie's, King Street, St James's, SW1** (071-839 9060). **Sotheby's, Sussex, Summers Place, Burlington House, W1** (0403 785933). **W.H. Lane, 64 Morda Road, Penzance** (0736 61447). **Drewatt Neate, Donnington Priory, Newbury, Berkshire** (0633 31234). **Wills, 101 New Bond Street, W1** (071-629 6602). **Christie's, 8 Place de la Tacquerie, 1204 Geneva** (4122 282544). **Sotheby's, New Bond Street, W1** (071-493 8080).

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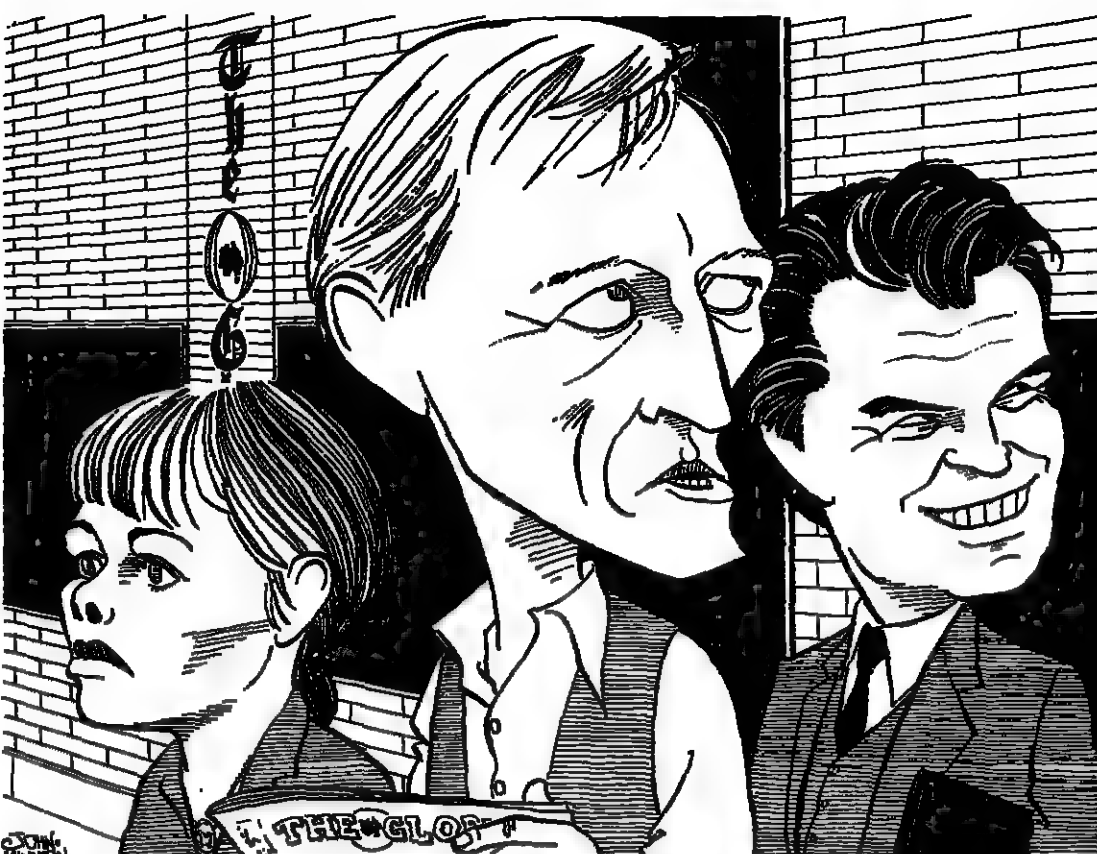
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Watching this week's television, Joe Joseph finds *The Paper Man* paper-thin on verisimilitude

Pressing matters for aspiring baron

Rebecca Gilling, John Bach as the media mogul and Oliver Tobias as the lawyer in *The Paper Man*

'Australia seems to have more media barons per thousand people than it has sheep'

find no printers — they have all walked out — and only about five journalists, which is enough for a poker game but not enough to write the leaders and check all the crossword clues. By cutting a pack of cards with the printworkers' boss in the pub next door, Cromwell

wins back his printing staff: a novel lesson in 1950s Australian industrial relations. His unreconstructed journalists, however, spend their first day under new management interviewing down-and-outs (no, not each other) and writing anguished stories under headlines such as "The Faces Of Poverty". Unfortunately, scriptwriters don't have anything as handy as an opening paragraph to tell their audience what they are on about. They have to do it indirectly. The stories about Sydney's underclass are meant to show us that the young Cromwell still cared about things other than his own ego. Oh well.

Possibly because this first edition of the new improved *Globe* is so dreadfully dull to read, but perhaps also because they had been sent by

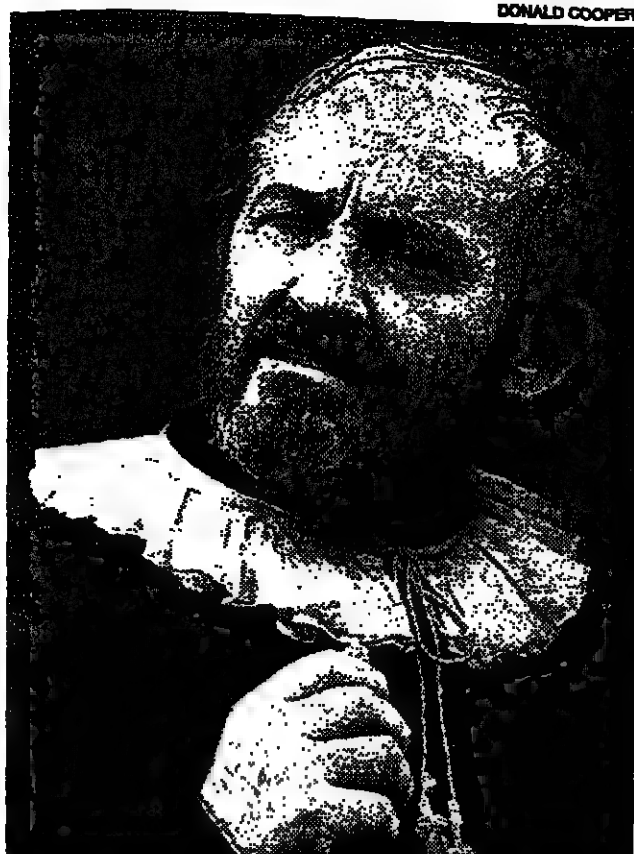
the thuggish Slater family which runs a rival afternoon paper in Sydney, a mob of heavies breaks into *The Globe's* offices, wrecks the presses and beats up the printers. Cromwell rushes to the press hall to save his baby but only succeeds in getting thrashed himself. Daddy Slater himself strikes Cromwell with a wrench and spits out, "If you want to try running a newspaper, try Perth." This kind of behaviour is heavy-handed even by the competitive standards of Fleet Street, and may explain why Australian press tycoons prefer to do their really serious media expansion overseas.

Poor old Cromwell faces one headache after another. The Slaters cut off his paper supply, sabotage his electricity, persuade the drivers' union to boycott *The Globe's* delivery vans. Worse still, the script forces him to approve story ideas by saying, "Okay Virginia, we go with it."

Cromwell soon twigs that pragmatism pays. Discreetly killing a story that would embarrass the state government can win influential friends and guaranteed government advertising. The decision to bite his editorial lip loses him his pregnant reporter girlfriend, who was chasing the story, but allows him to secure the cornerstone of his media empire. A fair swap? We shall see. Of course, had he lived in Dallas rather than Sydney, Cromwell could have called in Bill Dears to sort out his problems with the unfriendly Slaters. Dear, star of the latest episode of *Watching The Detectives* (Channel 4, Sunday), is one of those larger-than-life American gun-shots, who draws as if he were taking off-screen direction from Howard Hawks. "When people come to me it's because they're at a dead end. They really don't have any other place to go. So now they're my clients."

They are also presumably very rich, since Dear seems to charge his clients about the same per case as the GNP of many smaller African nations. Dear enjoys the good life. He travels to Europe, buys suits in dozens and wears gold rings the size of sausages. For someone who receives death threats regularly, who has been shot and knifed, and who hides loaded guns all over his body and his Texas mansion ("unloaded guns kill you"), Dear has a disarmingly easy-going manner. One can only assume he has developed this through necessity. It must be difficult for him to act mean when he confronts a mad axeman in a dark alley. "My name is Bill, dear. Now drop the axe."

● Lynne Truss is on holiday



Melodramatic villain: Charles Kay as Harpagon

Molière given a rough time

The Miser Olivier

THE simple stage direction "beats him" in a Molière comedy might seem to you and me an excuse for some harmless knockabout, perhaps a bit coarse by the National Theatre's standards. That is not the view of this revival's director, Steven Pimlott. Halfway through the evening, the coachman who doubles as the title-character's chief is "beaten", first by his master for insolence, then by his master's steward, a young blade secretly in love with the daughter of the house. The one gives him a satirical formal Dickinsonian caning. The other viciously boots him in the stomach, head, teeth and, just for variety, testicles.

Conceivably it is reasonable for Ebenezer Scrooge to turn into Wackford Squeers. But Valère, as the steward is called, is one of the play's two romantic heroes, and headed for the most exorbitantly upbeat of happy endings. Agreed, it is a truism that Molière brought a new moral rigour to the crude comic traditions he inherited. But the dour Pimlott is not satisfied with that. At different times in his production Molière seems to be collaborating with Zola, Strindberg, Edward Bond, Artaud and the Beckett who kept ageing thespians in dustbins throughout *Endgame*.

The tone is struck from the start. The miser Harpagon appears to have borrowed his servants from the local poor-houses and homes for the mentally subnormal; and they curtsy indiscriminately across the vast stage's bare boards as if in a 17th-century Lowry painting. The back wall, battleship grey in hue, consists partly of doors leading nowhere, partly of what strips of wire, netting suggest are the cages of some deserted zoo or the shelves of a huge, empty larder. Above is a mural on which St Sebastian is being skewered, John the Baptist's

head sitting on a tray, and Christ being crucified upside down. Not a very nice society, this, or such is Pimlott's earnest hint.

But it is for good reason that the programme solemnly opines that the play "epitomises patriarchal power at its most corrosive". The epicentre of the production is, not just Harpagon's greed, but his troubled relationship with Cleante, the son he humiliates by denying him money, pinching his girl and, here, slapping him violently in the face. As it happens, Adam Kotz gives a strong performance as an insecure adolescent only occasionally able to express the boiling rage he feels. His impotence shows itself in his liking for lurid yellow or red suits, rather than his modern counterpart might embrace his parents with gaudy T-shirts. But when he asks, "are you surprised that children long for their parents to die?", he quietly means it.

That is fine. What is more dubious is that Charles Kay should play Harpagon, not as the foolish paragon of tradition, not as a hog-eyed monomaniac obsessed with loot, not even in the modern psychological manner as an anally fixated tot, but as a melodramatic villain who bears down on his victims like the Grim Reaper. That might seem justifiable when, losing his beloved wife, he screams from a yellow spotlight that the entire neighbourhood should be hanged. But Pimlott does not seem to have noticed that his next line is funny, a demented demand that he be hanged too.

But then Thursday night's audience did not laugh much, and then often at the more brutal lines in Jeremy Sams's ostentatiously slangy translation. "You rarely old goat, may you drown in your own castles", from Eleanor Bron's opportunistic matchmaker, got more chorales than almost all the play's authentically comic encounters. We have heard of kitchen-sink drama. This is channel-house Molière.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

Parents' tale of two cities

Berlin Berlin Bridge Lane, Battersea

ONE of the more bitter consequences of the easing of border restrictions between the two Germanys in 1989 was the abandonment of many children (over a hundred in Berlin) by East German parents, selfishly eager to improve their lot. Some were left in locked flats, others in parked cars.

Bart Vanlaere and Louise Seyffert have certainly hit on a topical idea, and researched it with care, but the clash of cultures or value-systems which the theme promises never materialises and we are left with an essentially small-scale tale of two individuals.

This has its touching moments, performed by the authors with a raw naivety which, for a time at least, commands attention. Vincent and Kristina, who have escaped from the east leaving son Danny behind, are living in West Berlin as the Wall comes down. The physical disappearance of the Wall serves merely to emphasise the unhealed spits in their lives.

They separate, but only for Vincent to resume wooing his wife in the guise of a romantically disfigured artist in a Cyrano de Bergerac cloak. This seems highly improbable on more than one level, but the ingenueness of the playing drowns criticism.

There follows a flashback that charts the course of their initial romance, from meeting in a fairground to escape across the Wall. I found it hard to believe in a prolonged shouting match conducted in mid-escape (or did this wall not have ears?). Surely, too, Vanlaere (a Frans Hals figure with staring eyes and long, red hair falling from a high forehead) and Seyffert have diluted the dramatic substance by having Danny taken into care by East Germany's notoriously active social services before both his parents attempt to escape.

The versatile author-actors have also designed this show, using a large back-screen on to which they projected their snaps of moody Berlin interiors and the graffiti-covered Wall.

HARRY EYRES

Character fall of fun: Marion Levy in *Stella*

Uniform delight at breakneck pace

DANCE Stella The Place

THE Belgium choreographer Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker burst on our awareness at the age of 22 with a high energy piece of dancing to Steve Reich's music, *Pase*. Nine years on she keeps that energetic movement as the physical basis of her dance group, Roma.

Here is running, twisting and falling, most of it at breakneck speed, although cannily varied by quiet moments or by having dancers stand still for time watching the others. But the dancing is now overlaid with other dramatic elements.

In *Stella*, the latest example to reach London, extracts from three texts are interwoven. One is *Rashomon*, spat out with intense vehemence by Fumiyo Ikeda in Japanese. The other performers are less readily identified, but one of them spoke many of *Blanche Dubois* bravely said lines from the film version of *A Streetcar Named Desire* in an American accent. However, the title *Stella* comes not from *Blanche's* sister but from a work by Goethe which is not among his best known.

The promised extracts from this were not recognisable in English or German, so I presume that (unless translated into Japanese) they were what one small, excitable young woman was babbling in French while roaring with

laughter at being held, horizontal and wriggling, by two of her colleagues.

A further layer is added by intermittent musical accompaniment, Ligeti's *Symphonic Poem for 100 metronomes* half-way through (a nice musical joke), and a strong recording by Volker Banfield of Ligeti's *Eight Studies* for piano.

In addition, the five dancers occasionally move pot-plant or other objects, repeatedly slam doors or kick the furniture, and frequently put on fancy costumes over, or instead of, their standard Keersmaeker "naughty schoolgirl" uniforms of little black dresses, accompanied by white trunks that are prodigally displayed and high-heeled shoes.

In the choreographer's mind some connection presumably exists between these variegated elements, but I doubt that it communicates itself to many in the audience. The piece is tremendous fun, full of interest, but what it is actually about I can hardly begin to imagine.

The performers are first-rate. The three who speak also dance splendidly (often at the same time). One of their colleagues has long solos of slight but telling movement in a white frock, or a bath towel, and even the small, wide-smiling girl with the least characterisation inherent in her role comes over, like the others, as a powerful character on stage.

JOHN PERCIVAL

Vintage punches from the champ

CONCERT LSO/Solti Barbican

MOZART and Mahler is a programme much favoured by Sir Georg Solti. When he rehearses, cracking with authority in a T-shirt with a towel round his neck, he usually looks like a prizefighter bristling for the first round. I suspect that he favours the Mozart/Mahler combination for a similar, pugilistic reason: first, dazzle them with a bit of fancy footwork; then floor them with the big punch.

The old one-two worked superbly during his just-completed reign with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and it worked irresistibly again on Thursday night with the London Symphony Orchestra. Of course, calling Solti's footwork fancy in Mozart's "Haffner" Symphony is not the same as calling it dainty. Pungent wit enlivened the phrasing, certainly, and a tremendous charge of energy swept from start to finish, but the interpretation was built on massive, 19th-century sonorities. Rarely did a whisp of delicacy intrude upon this supremely confident show of anachronism.

These days that kind of Mozart playing is seldom heard. We will probably miss it when it is gone completely, and there is no alternative to period instruments. Perhaps someone should start a

preservation society, as they did for steam engines.

About Solti's reading of Mahler's Fifth Symphony there can be few complaints. He revels in his control of those tumbling rushes of complex counterpoint, or in the sudden withdrawal of sound at the tail of a phrase, or in fixing the violins with a steely gaze that compels unanimity in Mahler's most exposed lines. He punches out the classic moments of high drama like a great actor relishing the best lines in a play. And he acknowledges the satire of the third movement's "Viennese" glissandos and hesitations without letting that most tightly-organised of scherzos disintegrate into a series of parodies.

Perhaps the celebrated Adagio was a little too stressful, too lacking of reverie; difficult to imagine a Viennese Aschenbach peering out on a Venice beach during this interpretation. But Solti's music-making is all about affirming the bustle of life, not about contemplating the inertia of eternity.

The LSO, which plays this same programme at the Salzburg Whitsun Festival next week, responded with a brilliant display: principal horn and trumpet had marvellous nights, and the strings (boosted with an extra desk of players all round) produced a white-hot timbre that fair burnt up the passagework. Another knockout for the champ.

RICHARD MORRISON

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THE SUNDAY TIMES

Jodie Foster's fatale attraction

I built character — it's one of the most true and progressive portrayals of a female hero, ever. I feel proud that we didn't say, 'Here's a hero because she's really sweet and nice and that's why we like her.' The truth is she's a hero because she has tragic flaws. She faces things about herself that are ugly, and while facing them she solves the crime.

This is hero mythology, and that has never been applied to a female character in film, ever.

Jodie Foster, talking about her film *The Silence of the Lambs*, in *The Sunday Times* tomorrow

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Universities alerted over new wave of hackers

By Nick Nuttall, Technology Correspondent

YEARS of sensitive research is at risk from a new wave of attacks on academic and hospital computers which is sweeping Britain, it was disclosed yesterday.

Officers with the computer crime unit at Scotland Yard say they are seeking a team of British-based hackers who can penetrate systems in as little as a minute. Experts have found that the team are leaving powerful electronic codes in the machines called trojan horses.

The codes, which can hide in computers unnoticed, have

been found to override security precautions and may carry destructive instructions which are triggered at a later date. The hackers, who may also have hit computers abroad, are exploiting a design weakness to penetrate computers at will, Chris Pierce of the computer crime unit said.

The fault is in computers which use part or all of the BSD Unix system software. These include super and mini super computers which are popular at research centres across the country and some business and defence ministry machines.

"Potentially millions of computers are at risk. You cannot find anyone who does not use this kind of system," said Dennis Jackson, a computer security expert at the University of London's computer centre who is assisting police efforts to track the hackers and warn universities. "There is no reason to suppose that it is just universities who have been victims. There is some evidence that systems abroad have also been attacked," he said.

Up to 100 computers at 40 sites across Britain have so far been breached and there are fears that the attackers may have blatantly or inadvertently tampered with valuable research. Experts are assessing the potential damage and trying to unravel the purpose of the trojan horse code.

The hackers, who have been secretly attacking computers for at least three or four months before being noticed, may have also stolen research by transferring information down the telephone lines to their own machines.

Mr Pierce described the risks to medical research as "potentially catastrophic". Police are treating the case as a criminal investigation. Under the Computer Misuse Act 1990, hackers face up to five years in jail.

Tornado squadrons disbanded

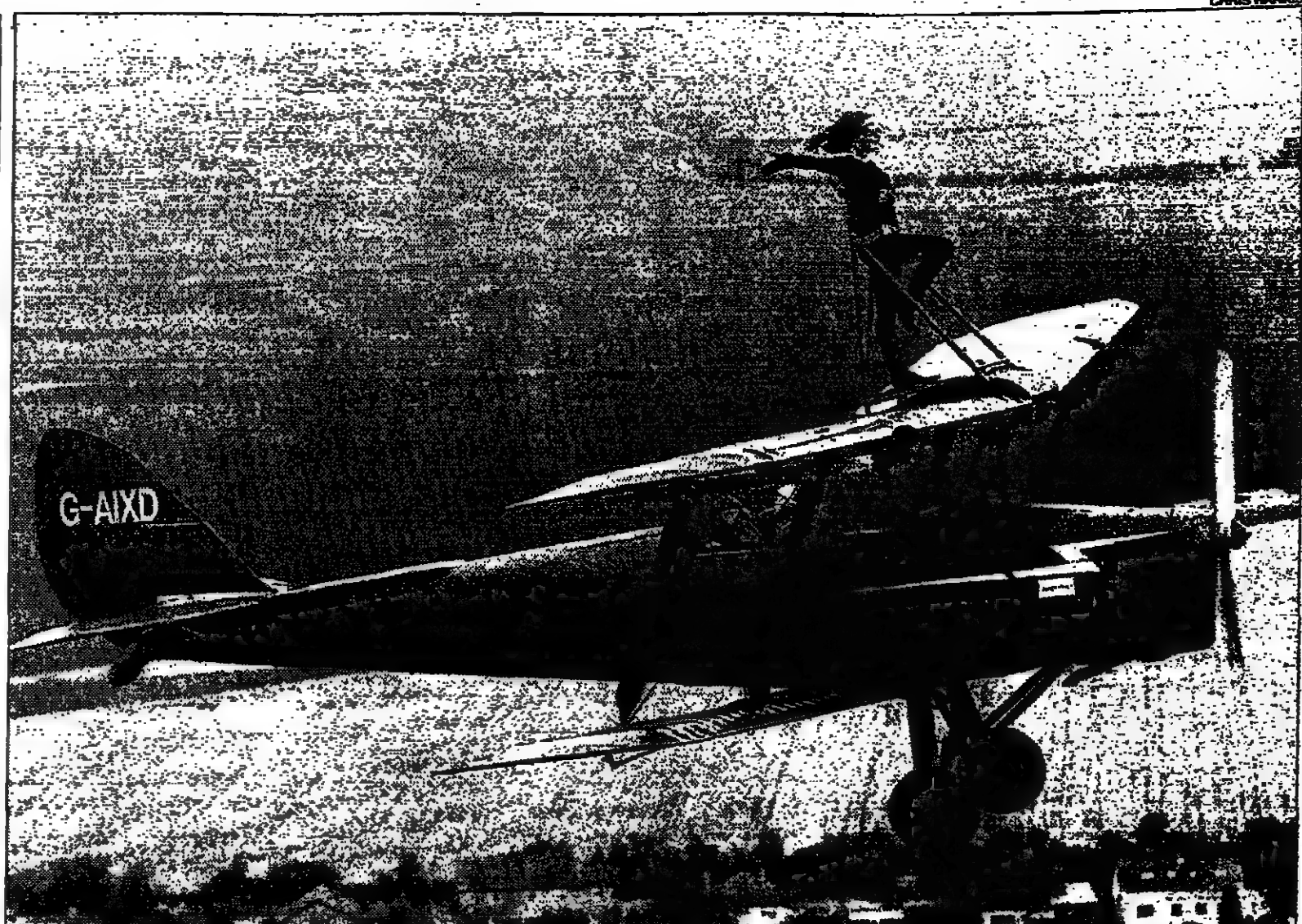
Continued from page 1

squadrons at Wiltshire are also being disbanded.

RAF Germany will be left with four Tornado GR1 squadrons, two Harrier squadrons, two helicopter squadrons, and one Andover squadron. No 15, whose motto is "Aim Sure", and 16 and 20 squadrons, all based at RAF Laarbruch, will be disbanded between December, this year, and May, next year.

The ministry said that the names of the squadrons would not die, but would be kept for some day when a new RAF squadron is introduced. The three disbanded squadrons date from the first world war. Crews in the squadrons are to go to other posts. The Tornadoes put in storage will be kept at RAF St Athan, Wales. There are no plans to "fatten" other squadrons.

In yesterday's Tornado crash, the two crew ejected after the jet developed difficulties. They were taken to hospital in Hamburg.



Phase sailing: Caroline Pridham during the elements stay a Tiger Moth flown by Georgina Hunter-Jones over White Waltham, Berkshire

Pupils 'expected to fail'

Continued from page 1

religion, gender and class. On the positive side, the Americans said that English pupils were more polite and better behaved than American children and that schools were more caring, bringing a sense of home to deprived areas. Dedicated and committed teachers prized writing and gave "exquisite attention" to young pupils but suffered low morale. The Americans were also impressed by the sense of community created by school uniforms, morning assemblies and shared meals. English children did not bring street problems into school, unlike their American counterparts, and there was comparatively little graffiti despite shoddy, meagre, cramped and modest school buildings.

The Americans were, how-

ever, critical of the "individualistic" approach, saying it would have been more profitable for teachers to spend some time explaining new ideas to the whole class. The non-competitive atmosphere meant children had no deadlines for work, could choose how much they wanted to do each day and were not forced to repeat a year if they failed to make sufficient progress.

"Students were left on their own to an extraordinary degree and it was difficult, if not impossible, to know the extent to which they understood what they were doing," said the report.

"The advanced students, and students who are self-motivated, can work successfully in this environment - but not poorly motivated students or students having

difficulty understanding basic concepts." The American report also found that education about other cultures was restricted largely to schools with ethnic minorities and some focused too narrowly on "all things British".

A Tory-controlled council is to cut 200 teachers' jobs - blaming the losses on the "vagaries" of government policies. Warwickshire County Council was ordered by Michael Heseltine, the Secretary of State for the Environment, to cut £278 million budget.

The council is still awaiting a reply to its appeal, but yesterday the education committee decided it would have to reduce its 4,000 teaching staff by about 200.

By Alice Thomson

PROVING that stunt flying is no longer a male preserve, the first all-female wing-walking team took to the skies over Britain this week. Caroline Pridham, a stuntwoman aged 24, and her pilot, Georgina Hunter-Jones, aged 33, perform acrobatics in which they reach speeds of 130mph in the loops. They are to tour Europe this summer, visiting air shows, carnivals and festivals.

There are fewer than half a dozen women on the European stunt-flying circuit. "The pilot briefings and aircraft hangars are always filled with men," Miss Pridham said. She gained her hang-glider licence when she was 17, later obtaining private pilot's and ballooning licences.

Miss Hunter-Jones is the only qualified female stand-pilot in Britain. She has been flying the classic pre-war Boeing Stearman and Tiger



Miss Pridham: safely back on the ground

Moth biplanes used in the stunt since she was 17 and is also a qualified pilot instructor. "You certainly get more attention as a woman, but Britain has always had a tradition of intrepid women pilots since Amy Johnson," she said. "They have calm nerves and make excellent pilots."

Gummer outraged by whale banquet

By Alice Thomson and Our Foreign Staff

JOHN Gummer, the agriculture and fisheries minister, last night made an outspoken attack on a whale banquet in Japan in advance of this year's International Whaling Commission (IWC) meeting, where Japan will be seeking to have the commercial whaling ban lifted.

Conservation groups were also furious after hearing that politicians and entertainers in Tokyo gorged themselves on whale delicacies on Thursday in an attempt to revive the vanishing industry.

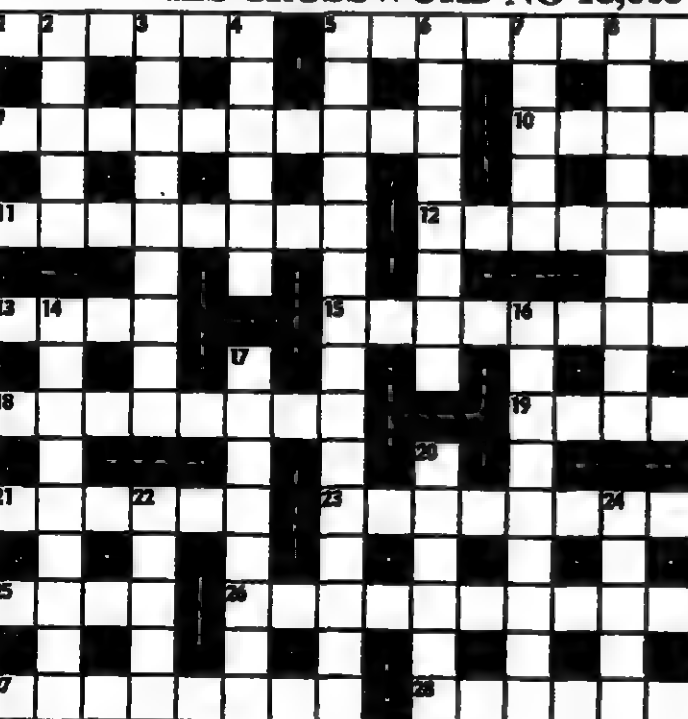
Mr Gummer said: "Any politician taking part in a feast celebrating commercial whaling should be ashamed of himself. The world knows perfectly well that whalers have attacked stocks almost to extinction. It is only the moratorium on commercial whaling which has saved the whale, and the United Kingdom will be fighting to keep the moratorium at the IWC conference at the end of this month."

The banquet, attended by 40 parliament members and 300 guests, was timed to precede the annual meeting of the commission in Reykjavik on May 27 when delegates will review the commercial whaling ban imposed in 1986 to protect dwindling stocks. With Japan, the world's largest whale consumer, Norway and Iceland will also be seeking an end to the ban.

Mr Gummer made clear in Parliament on Thursday that the government was not prepared to contemplate a resumption of commercial whaling because it had received no proof that whale stocks were at healthy levels or that the killing of whales had become any more humane. He said: "I have made it absolutely clear that there is no case for raising the moratorium and we are using every possible pressure to ensure that it continues."

The 265th of meat for the Tokyo banquet came from whales brought home by the latest research expedition, which returned from the Antarctic last month.

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 18,603



- ACROSS**
- When cable is in place, drive forward (6).
 - Leader of union forcing a rebellion (8).
 - Tips about parking conclude the extra reading matter (10).
 - It's inclined to make a racket (4).
 - Tortuous roamings of a living creature (8).
 - Not a country in need of food (6).
 - Beginnings of journeys everyone hates, under a reckless driver (4).
 - Application of punishment after backchat (8).
 - Evangelist married after a struggle, showing little enthusiasm (8).
 - Enslavement's money-box? (4).
 - Crew member who created Dracula (6).
 - Quarters outside Leeds, possibly superfluous (8).
 - A plot put together in a place of retirement (4).
 - What a bloomer, making the game last too long (10).
 - Southern sea always controlled harshly (8).
- DOWN**
- A half-hearted killer, more than ready to be drunk (5).
 - Too soon to repeat rum distribution (9).
 - Young fellow's fabrication about a theologian (6).
 - Not expressing praise for new penal community? About right (15).
 - One left Rio with vessels carrying oriental fruit (4-4).
 - She tempted soldiers into wrongdoing (5).
 - Relating to the figures in Book Four? (9).
 - Just a quarter leave island subject to 5 ac (9).
 - 1 work in the gallery to provide stimulation (9).
 - On the other side in the Continental ball game (8).
 - The old salt in the ocean greyhound? (3-3).
 - Haul in vessel, making king nervously irritable (5).
 - Periods on the ocean (5).

Solution to Puzzle No 18,597

INTERMEDIATE BLEED
DON'T SUE KIE
INTERIOR SUEIGHT
OHLA B E H E
F E R I A T A I N
CLOUTIER SUEIGHT
A R C E N N
DEERHOUND SWIFT
D A O N O
IBSEN SUSTAINED
B A N E H J O
C A N V E I N D I A N S
A T L E P I C E
R A N K S T A R K N A K E D

Solution to Puzzle No 18,602

DISQUALIFY STEW
A U T O I E A
M A N S E R V A N Y W R I T
M D R E O O R T
T I F F S P E C U L A T E
H A L F I N C H B I A N C H
M O D E R N P O E S T A R
E D A N O N
R E C O L L E C T H I N D
O V P H O S L
Y A R D B A G G E R O U S E
A U T I N S E R A
L A M B B R I D G E H E A D

PARKER A prize of a superb Parker Duofold International Fountain Pen, with an 18 carat gold nib and fully guaranteed for the lifetime of the original owner will be given for the first five correct solutions opened next Thursday. Entries should be addressed to: The Times Saturday Crossword Competition, PO Box 486, Virginia Street, London E1 9DD. The winners and solution will be published next Saturday.

Name/Address.....

DIAGRAM

- By Philip Howard**
- DIAGRAM**
- A relay race
 - A three-humped dromedary
 - A course of passing
- NURAGHE**
- Heat headaches
 - A Sardian brock
 - A water lily
- MARA**
- The Phoenician letter M
 - A graveyard herb
 - The Patagonian hare
- ENGULGED**
- Fifty
 - Exaggerated
 - Having your tail in a mouth

Answers on page 15

THE TIMES WEATHER

For the latest region by region forecast, 24 hours a day, dial 0898 5001 followed by the appropriate code.

Greater London	701
Kent, Surrey, Sussex	702
Devon & Cornwall	703
Wiltshire, Gloucestershire, Somerset	704
Berkshire, Bucks, Oxon	705
Bedfordshire & Eastern Cheshire	706
Northampton, Suffolk, Cambs	707
West Midlands & Shropshire	708
Shropshire, Hereford & Worcester	709
East Midlands	710
Lincoln & Humbershire	711
Dyfed & Powys	712
Gloucestershire & Cheshire	713
N W England	714
W & S Yorks & Dalles	715
N E England	716
Cumbria & Lake District	717
S W Scotland	718
W Central Scotland	719
Edin & Fife/Lowther & Borders	720
E Central Scotland	721
Grampian & E Highlands	722
N W Scotland	723
Caithness, Orkney & Shetland	724
W Ireland	725
West of Ireland	726
West of Ireland	727
West of Ireland	728
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West of Ireland	730
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West of Ireland	745

For the latest AA traffic and roadworks information, 24 hours a day, dial 0836 401 followed by the appropriate code

AA ROADWATCH

For the latest AA traffic and roadworks information, 24 hours a day, dial 0836 401 followed by the appropriate code

AA ROADWATCH

For the latest AA traffic and roadworks information, 24 hours a day, dial 0836 401 followed by the appropriate code

WEATHER

Southwest England and Wales will have a mainly cloudy day with patchy rain. The rest of England will see some sun but there will be showers, especially at first in northern England. Northern Ireland and Scotland will have a mostly dry day with some sun but cloud will thicken with rain spreading into Northern Ireland and western Scotland later in the day. Outlook: bright spells but rain on Monday

AFRICA

MIDDAY: 14-18; 19-22; 23-26; 27-30; 31-34; 35-38; 39-42; 43-46; 47-50; 51-54; 55-58; 59-62; 63-66; 67-70; 71-74; 75-78; 79-82; 83-86; 87-90; 91-94; 95-98; 99-102; 103-106; 107-110; 111-114; 115-118; 119-122; 123-126; 127-130; 131-134; 135-138; 139-142; 143-146; 147-150; 151-154; 155-158; 159-162; 163-166; 167-170; 171-174; 175-178; 179-182; 183-186; 187-190; 191-194; 195-198; 199-202; 203-206; 207-210; 211-214; 215-218; 219-222; 223-226; 227-230; 231-234; 235-238; 239-242; 243-246; 247-250; 251-254; 255-258; 259-262; 263-266; 267-270; 271-274; 275-278; 279-282; 283-286; 287-290; 291-294; 295-298; 299-302; 303-306; 307-310; 311-314; 315-318; 319-322; 323-326; 327-330; 331-334; 335-338; 339-342; 343-346; 347-350; 351-354; 355-358; 359-362; 363-366; 367-370; 371-374; 375-378; 379-382; 383-386; 387-390; 391-394; 395-398; 399-402; 403-406; 407-410; 411-414; 415-418; 419-422; 423-426; 427-430; 431-434; 435-438; 439-442; 443-446; 447-450; 451-454; 455-458; 459-462; 463-466; 467-470; 471-474; 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923-926; 927-930; 931-934; 935-938; 939-942; 943-946; 947-950; 951-954; 955-958; 959-962; 963-966; 967-970; 971-974; 975-978; 979-982; 983-986; 987-990; 991-994; 995-998; 999-1002; 1003-1006; 1007-1010; 1011-1014; 1015-1018; 1019-1022; 1023-1026; 1027-1030; 1031-1034; 1035-1038; 1039-1042; 1043-1046; 1047-1050; 1051-1054; 1055-1058; 1059-1062; 1063-1066; 1067-1070; 1071-1074; 1075-1078; 1079-1082; 1083-1086; 1087-1090; 1091-1094; 1095-1098; 1099-1102; 1103-1106; 1107-1110; 1111-1114; 1115-1118; 1119-1122; 1123-1126; 1127-1130; 1131-1134; 1135-1138; 1139-1142; 1143-1146; 1147-1150; 1151-1154; 1155-1158; 1159-1162; 1163-1166; 1167-1170; 1171-1174; 1175-1178; 1179-1182; 1183-1186; 1187-1190; 1191-1194; 1195-1198; 1199-1202; 1203-1206; 1207-1210; 1211-1214; 1215-1218; 1219-1222; 1223-1226; 1227-1230; 1231-1234; 1235-1238; 1239-1242; 1243-1246; 1247-1250; 1251-1254; 1255-1258; 1259-1262; 1263-1266; 1267-1270; 1271-1274; 1275-1278; 1279-1282; 1283-1286; 1287-1290; 1291-1294; 1295-1298; 1299-1302; 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2031-2034; 2035-2038; 2039-2042; 2043-2046; 2047-2050; 2051-2054; 2055-2058; 2059-2062; 2063-2066; 2067-2070; 2071-2074; 2075-2078; 2079-2082; 2083-2086; 2087-2090; 2091-2094; 2095-2098; 2099-2102; 2103-2106; 2107-2110; 2111-2114; 2115-2118; 2119-2122; 2123-2126; 2127-2130; 2131-2134; 2135-2138; 2139-2142; 2143-2146; 2147-2150; 2151-2154; 2155-2158; 2159-2162; 2163-2166; 2167-2170; 2171-2174; 2175-2178; 2179-2182; 2183-2186; 2187-2190; 2191-2194; 2195-2198; 2199-2202; 2203-2206; 2207-2210; 2211-2214; 2215-2218; 2219-2222; 2223-2226; 2227-2230; 2231-2234; 2235-2238; 2239-2242; 2243-2246; 2247-2250; 2251-2254; 2255-2258; 2259-2262; 2263-2266; 2267-2270; 2271-2274; 2275-2278; 2279-2282; 2283-2286; 2287-2290; 2291-2294; 2295-2298; 2299-2302; 2303-2306; 2307-2310; 2311-2314; 2

THE TIMES BUSINESS

SATURDAY MAY 11 1991

Business Editor
John Bell

MONEY

Ensign writes off £18m

Ensign Trust, the troubled trust specialising in unquoted companies, has written a further £18 million off its investments, equivalent to 5.9p per share, after a £70 million writedown in January.

The investment trust, whose management has been changed at the behest of the Merchant Navy Officers Pension Fund, its controlling shareholder, made a loss of £58,000 in the six months to end March. An interim dividend of 0.3p is being paid, but there will be no final dividend.

Whitbread Investment Company has raised its dividend by 20 per cent to 13.9p per share.

Temps, page 28

Man of steel



Sir Robert Scholey, chairman of British Steel, likes people to stand up for themselves. He is a legendary bully within the company but rejects the idea that he is thick-skinned and insensitive. He tells Carol Leonard that he has had to shut himself off from personal attacks.

Page 27

Holiday loans

People hoping to obtain cheap mortgages, advertised at 4.4 per cent, will be able to benefit only if they join a society and make payments for at least ten years towards a holiday scheme. The society has already withdrawn leaflets after complaints to trading standards officers that the advertising was misleading.

Page 31

Your letters



The AA is praised for acting in the interests of the private motorist after the association sent one reader a motor insurance quotation that was £200 less than it had originally quoted at renewal.

Page 34

Coal sell-off

British Coal's contracts with electricity generating companies will determine the success of government privatisation plans, said Neil Clarke, the chairman.

Page 26

Savers suffer

The Nationwide Building Society's surprise mortgage cut to 12.25 per cent for mortgages under £60,000 is not such good news for savers. Rates on investment accounts will be reduced in July.

Page 31

Pension loss

Companies are starting to bring retirement ages for men and women workers into line. But women in companies that have raised their pension age to 65 could lose 25 per cent of their transfer values.

Page 32

Widow's fight

A widow has had an eight-year fight to keep her home and pay the bills after her husband died suddenly without signing a will.

Page 33

Abbey ready to take investors to court over share sales

By BARBARA ELLIS

ABBEY National has threatened 500 of its former shareholders with legal action unless they send in money made on mistaken or fraudulent sales of shares by next Wednesday. The group is also trying to get more than 100,000 investors to return duplicate shares, dividend payments or extra allocations of shares.

The moves are part of the former building society's continuing struggle to repair administrative havoc wreaked at the time of its flotation as a bank in July 1989. Savers and borrowers were given 100 free shares each at the time of the flotation. These are now worth £270 and dividends of £15.20 have been paid.

The burnt remains of an unknown

number of new share certificates were discovered outside a South London mailing house hired by Lloyds Bank, days after the flotation. Abbey executives estimated the number of certificates missing based on the highest and lowest serial numbers fished out of the charred papers. They then rushed out 500,000 duplicate certificates: about 100,000 more than they thought had been burned. The duplicates carried the same serial numbers as the originals.

A spokesman said: "We were erring on the side of caution." He added that indemnity forms issued with the duplicates put shareholders under a legal obligation to return the certificate if the original arrived. Abbey, however, cannot say how many indemnity forms or duplicates were re-

turned. The spokesman said: "The figures are still hazy. They are still coming back."

He said Lloyds Bank had been able to identify people who sold a duplicate certificate as well as an original. The registrars had also been checking how many people "wittingly or unwittingly" managed to acquire more free shares than they were due.

After two attempts at persuading these people by letter to return the proceeds of one of their sales, Lloyds has passed on recalcitrant cases to the Abbey National shareholder relations office. "Most people are realising either their error or a combination of our error and theirs," said the Abbey spokesman, claiming that more than half of the several hundred people

approached by Lloyds had paid what the registrars asked.

Abbey also sent out multiple sets of application forms for the free shares to some members. The spokesman said the group's computers were being fed on a first-name basis: sets of forms would have been sent to Peter Baker, P Baker and P Baker at the same address.

The spokesman said: "It could have been a father and son at the same address; it was impossible to check at the time." If someone sent several forms and claimed free shares on all of them, the registrars did not spot it.

Abbey sent a letter to people with duplicate shares stating: "From whatever angle I approach this situation, I am unable

to conceive of a way by which you should be allowed to retain the funds from this sale." The letter also asks for a cheque for the net proceeds of the sale.

"I must hear from you within 14 days to avoid your case being passed to our legal department," the letter ends.

John Fry, Abbey's group services director, described the bank's situation as "intensely complicated".

He said he hoped that Abbey would not have to go to court over the wrongly obtained shares and dividends, adding: "In these things, one has to weigh up the cost of doing it against the morality of not doing it and it is a fine balance."

Mortgage cuts, page 31

Granada seeks £310m as chief departs

By MICHAEL TATE, CITY EDITOR

GRANADA, the television to motorway services group, has announced the departure of its chief executive, unveiled plans to raise £310 million through a rights issue and sale of its bingo business, estimated a sharp fall in interim profits and almost halved the dividend.

Shell-shocked shareholders saw the price fall 27p to 184p. The fundraising moves are designed to replenish a balance sheet that showed gearing of 125 per cent at the end of March.

Granada Clubs, the bingo division, has been sold to Bass for £147 million, and the group is asking shareholders for a further £163 million via a rights issue.

At the same time, Granada confirmed that Derek Lewis, the chief executive, would leave the company as soon as a successor was found. Neither Alex Bernstein, the chairman, nor Mr Lewis would comment on whether the resignation had been a condition of City support for the fundraising.

Meanwhile, the total dividend for the current year will fall from 12.3p to 7p a share.

Granada's bingo business, comprising 73 clubs in Britain, lifts the Bass chain to 164, roughly the same number as Rank Organisation, which

includes the Mecca interests. Significant investment would have been needed to enable Granada to compete with Rank, says Mr Bernstein, with little prospect of growth in what is a mature market.

The purchase price comprises a £56 million cash payment and the assumption by Bass of £91 million of debt.

The City has been expecting dramatic action from Granada. Pressure has been mounting from institutional shareholders and, it is understood, SG Warburg, the company's own financial adviser, as borrowings continued to rise and trading conditions showed no sign of recovery.

Mr Bernstein said that after the bingo sale and completion of the rights issue, Granada's net borrowings would fall from a March 28 figure of £634 million to a pro forma £324 million, reducing the gearing level from 125 per cent to a pro forma 50 per cent.

The figures do not include Granada's commitments to BSkyB, the satellite TV venture in which it has a 12.5 per cent stake, and to which Mr Bernstein confirmed the group's commitment. Granada has provided guarantees of £131 million to BSkyB's bankers, and has agreed to take up its share of the first half of the £200 million rights funding announced on May 1.

Mr Bernstein said: "We remain confident of the future

success of BSkyB and intend to maintain our share of the venture, which would require the investment of a further £25 million." This year, £12.5 million will be committed. His confidence contrasts with the views of Reed International, a former fellow shareholder in BSkyB. Peter Davis, Reed's chairman and chief executive, is also to resign from the Granada board.

Under the terms of the rights issue, shareholders are offered one new share for every three held, at 140p a share, a deep discount against Thursday's 210p close.

Graham Wallace, Granada's finance director, explained that the price was based on the reduced level of dividend and yield expected this year. "We feel a 6 1/2 per cent yield is appropriate for us, and structured the issue price accordingly," he said.

Granada estimates that its pre-tax profits for the 28 weeks to April 14 were £38 million, compared with £63.3 million a year ago, after a surge in interest payments from £21.1 million to £34.7 million, and that earnings will fall from 11.7p to 6.4p a share.

The interim dividend will be cut from 4.4p to 2.5p a share, and the board forecasts a final profit of not less than 4.5p (7.9p).

Temps, page 28



Out of the picture: Derek Lewis, the chief executive, is to leave Granada as soon as a replacement is found

Bass puts Coral Racing up for auction

By RICHARD EVANS AND MARTIN BARROW

BASS is considering offers for Coral Racing, one of Britain's three biggest bookmakers. The move was announced on the day Bass bought Granada's bingo businesses for £147 million.

Coral has 1,000 betting offices in the United Kingdom and the Irish Republic and 360 in Belgium. It employs

5,000 people and is estimated to have made profits of £30 million last year. Analysts say the business could attract offers of up to £500 million.

Schroders, the merchant bank, will handle the sale. A decision is expected within two months. Peter Sherlock, chief executive of the leisure division of Bass and chairman of Coral, said the company had received several ap-

proaches, including a number from other bookmakers.

Bass bought Coral in 1980 and developed it into one of the country's three largest chains, alongside Ladbrokes and William Hill, which is now part of Brent Walker.

Mr Sherlock said speculation surrounding William Hill and its highly geared parent company had focused attention on Coral and prompted the unsolicited offers. He

added: "My primary purpose is to stop the uncertainty and find the best possible future for Coral Racing. If that turned out to be in some other company's hands one would have to accept it, albeit with enormous reluctance."

In March, Bass launched a £557.9 million rights issue to help reduce borrowings of £1.4 billion and fund further investment. Bass shares rose 7p to 97 1/2p.

Racal confirms demerger plan

By JOHN BELL, BUSINESS EDITOR

RACAL Electronics has confirmed that it is on course for one of the biggest demergers in history - a £3 billion giveaway of shares in Racal Telecom, its Vodafone subsidiary.

Since the demerger plan was revealed last November, there has been widespread stock market speculation that the original plan for a three-way split of Racal Electronics may be modified or deferred.

The plan involved a free handout of shares in Racal Telecom, a similar disposal of shares in Chubb, the Racal Electronics security operations, and a buyout of the remaining electronics interests by a management team led by Sir Ernest Harrison.

chairman of both quoted Racal companies.

Confirmation that at least the Vodafone demerger is on track came yesterday, when Racal Electronics posted a circular to holders of its 7 per cent convertible loan stock.

The trust deed requires 45 days' notice of a demerger to be given to loan stock holders so that they can convert into ordinary shares or seek redemption of the stock.

The trust deed will be changed so that unless a holder elects for redemption, he will be deemed to have converted his stock into shares. But any elections will be subject to shareholder approval of the demerger plan.

Mirror flotation barely subscribed

By OUR CITY STAFF

THE heavy promotional campaign for the Mirror Group Newspapers flotation failed to entice British investors to the extent hoped, and the issue was only 1.07 times subscribed. After the final count yesterday, 104,000 applications had been made for 122 million ordinary shares.

Those who subscribed for 1,500 or fewer shares will receive all they asked for, while larger applications will receive 90 per cent. More than 100,000 applications were received from individuals, but City institutions appear to have shown little interest.

A further £98 million of the total £246 million of shares sold was raised by the over-

sees placing by Salomon Brothers.

Ian McIntosh of Samuel Montagu, which handled the flotation, made clear there had been no applications for the public offer from companies or funds connected with Robert Maxwell, whose family interests still control 51 per cent of MGN.

Pergamon Holdings, Mr Maxwell's private company, has sold its 65 million shares in GPG, representing 20 per cent of the former financial services group, to a company in the Brierley Investments group, which now owns 83 per cent. GPG shares were suspended on the stock market at 23p in December.

Captains of industry swell chorus of profit cautions

Bank acts to damp rate cut hopes

By ANATOLE KALETSKY AND GEORGE SIVELL

THE Bank of England sought to restrain hopes of an early cut in interest rates, fanning suspicions that the central bank may not be entirely confident about the prospects for inflation. The move came as several more captains of industry warned shareholders about the impact of the recession on profits at annual meetings.

The FT-SE 100 index ended down 17.5 at 2,524.3 after reaching 2,554.9, above the previous closing high of 2,545.3 reached in April.

Base rates were widely expected to fall next Friday, when the government is due to announce a steep drop in headline inflation from 8.4 per cent to around 6 per cent. But yesterday afternoon the Bank of England took the unusual step of lending to the discount houses for two weeks, instead of the conventional one, signalling that 12 per cent remained its target interest rate for the time being.

Several City analysts said the Bank's

manoeuvre virtually ruled out an interest rate cut next Friday, but others noted that a similar signal was issued to quell interest rate speculation in mid-March, only to be followed by a cut in base rates three days later.

On the industrial front the squeals from captains of industry grew louder. Bower, the packaging and building materials group, said trading in the first half of this year is likely to be below the six months to last June.

Norman Ireland, the chairman, said: "I regret we still see no signs of an economic upturn in the United Kingdom, the United States or Australia coming through to our markets."

Pearson, the media, banking and leisure conglomerate, said profits in the first half of this year will inevitably be well down on the record results of the first half of last year.

Lord Blackman, the chairman, told the annual meeting: "Although there is some evidence that conditions are no longer deteriorating there is little scope for any improvement to have a percep-

tible effect before the second half of the year."

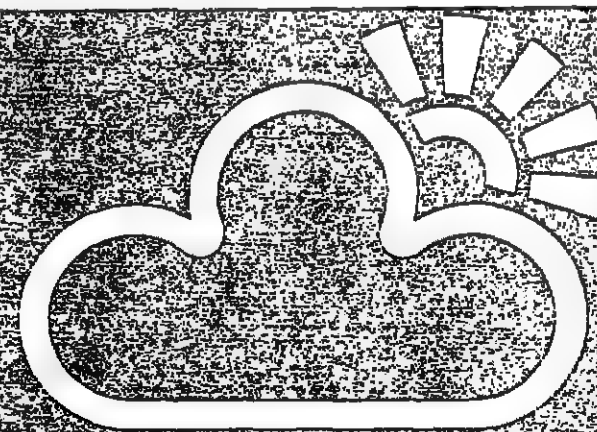
Lord Sterling, chairman of P&O, repeated a warning that the company's 1991 results could not be "anything but disappointing, especially in the first half". He told the annual meeting: "While our weekly indicators are not showing a worsening, there is little more than a suspicion of a recovery."

Shares in Burmah Castrol, the oil products group, fell 13p to 575p after Lawrence Urquhart, the chairman and chief executive, said that the first three months trading of this year had been remarkably tough for all Burmah's business groups.

Hawker Siddeley, the engineering group, said it was still not possible to see any clear signs of an economic resurgence. Sir Peter Baxendale, the chairman, said there were also no signs of a potential predator building a stake in the company. BTR has been a rumoured bidder.

Stock market, page 28

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	SDR 1.2124

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obsc \$356.50-357.00 (2208-00)	
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THE SUNDAY TIMES

The iceman

"Jaguar's managers, used to Sir John Egan's soft, smooth style, have been suddenly thrown into a hard school. They call Bill Hayden, their new boss from Ford, the iceman. Others say he is the best automotive man in Europe. But can he turn Jaguar round?"

Business - The Sunday Times tomorrow

Government told contracts are key to coal sell-off

By ROSS TIEMAN, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

THE success of government plans to privatise British Coal will depend entirely on the quality of the corporation's contracts with electricity generating companies. Neil Clarke, the chairman, said. Mr Clarke made clear that the government had strong financial reasons to take a close interest in contract discussions, which begin soon. British Coal's present contracts with National Power and PowerGen expire in March 1993.

He told the annual conference of the British Association of Colliery Management in Buxton, Derbyshire: "When we come to market, any prospective purchaser will look at the strength of our guaranteed sales contracts before they look at our invest-

ment record, our performance, or our strategy. Indeed, they may not look beyond the sales contracts at all."

His remarks will increase pressure on the government to exert the influence of its 40 per cent stake in the generating companies to ensure they agree a contract that enables British Coal to remain viable.

His speech was made after it emerged that British Coal is holding talks with Scottish Power about a joint venture to run the 1,152 megawatt Cockenzie power station on opencast Scottish coal and export much of the output to England. Sources within the corporation insist the group's main objective is to secure its market at the power station.

The joint venture would enable the corporation to cut transport costs and share the profit from the generation of electricity.

A British Coal source insisted the talks were still at a "desperately early" stage. The corporation, however, is keen to reach a deal.

Cockenzie is capable of consuming more than 1.5 million tonnes of coal a year if part of its output can be exported to England. The additional sales would be a valuable addition to BC's contracted sales to Scottish Power of 2.5 million tonnes a year.

Although British Coal does not want to be seen to compete with its largest customers, National Power, and PowerGen, the generating companies, it appears content to become involved in what it terms "niche markets".



'Excellent result': Harry Moore, chief executive

CRS bucks trend

By DEREK HARRIS

BRITAIN'S biggest Co-op retailer has achieved sales and profits improvements not only in grocery but also in blighted high street sectors such as electrical goods and furniture.

In the year to end January, Co-operative Retail Services (CRS) increased sales more than 11 per cent to nearly £1.3 billion while trading profits rose just over 14 per cent to £44.9 million.

Harry Moore, CRS chief executive, described it as "an excellent trading result in another difficult year for retailers" and promised fur-

ther success this year. There was a 21.5 per cent increase in sales of furniture, carpets and home textiles, compared with a high street norm in the sector of a near 1 per cent fall.

In electrical goods, which showed less than a 1 per cent sales value improvement in shops generally last year, CRS notched up a turnover rise of 11.5 per cent.

It meant the CRS non-food division, now Britain's fifth largest department store retailer, not only increased sales by 14 per cent to £191 million but also raised trading profits 34 per cent.

Rules limit radio control

By MELINDA WITTSTOCK
MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

RULES governing the ownership of local and national commercial radio licences, announced yesterday by the Radio Authority, will prevent all commercial television companies and newspapers from owning more than 20 per cent of any of the three independent national radio (INR) licences up for auction.

However, local radio stations may be wholly owned by the Channel 3 national breakfast licensee, Channel 5 or a satellite television company such as BSkyB. Regional Channel 3 licences, restricted to 20 per cent stakes in local radio stations within their regions, may completely own independent local radio (ILR) stations outside their areas. This rule also applies to local newspapers.

The authority also confirmed that no single organisation will be permitted to control more than one national radio licence and 20 local services, or more than 15 per cent of audience reach, depending on which maximum is reached first. A points system, assigned in accordance with audience reach and type of licence, restricts companies to 63 points (15 per cent) of a total 423 points at present.

Should a company exceed this, the Radio Authority may force it to sell its most recently acquired interests within 14 days.

As the number of radio stations expands, the number of points available to each company will also grow, said Peter Baldwin, the Radio Authority's chief executive.

Under the new rules, non-EC nationals are prevented from taking a controlling stake, defined as 50 per cent or more, in a national or local station. Local authorities, political bodies, publicly funded British organisations and advertising agencies are restricted to 5 per cent shareholdings in local and national stations.

Religious organisations, prevented from owning more than 5 per cent of a national franchise, may wholly own local stations.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Microvitec succeeds in battle for Logitek

MICROVITEC has won the takeover battle for Logitek, a fellow computer concern, after raising the terms of its offer. The Logitek board recommended acceptance of the revised terms, which value the company at £3.5 million and its shares at 19.4p, compared with 18p before the announcement. Microvitec had upped its bid from a straight one-for-one share swap to an offer of 21 for 20.

However, Microvitec's £2.5 million one-for-two rights issue, announced at the same time as the original offer, has been taken up by only 6.2 per cent of shareholders. The shares were issued at 19p compared with yesterday's 16p closing price. Logitek shares fell 2 1/2p to 16p.

Palma passes its dividend

PALMA Group, the textiles company, is passing its dividend after pre-tax losses deepened to £2 million in the 13 months to end-January, compared with a loss of £246,000 in the previous 12 months. Turnover fell from £32 million to £29.9 million. The loss jumped to 7.97p (0.83p) a share. There is no final dividend (2.5p) and no annual payout (3.7p).

Losses curbed at Radamec

RADAMEC Group, the control systems manufacturer, has slashed losses from £3.39 million to £396,000 in the year to end December. Turnover climbed from £9.69 million to £12.1 million. Interest payments fell from £711,000 to £249,000. The loss per share is down from 17.4p to 1.8p. Once again, there is no dividend. Shares were unchanged at 16p.

Parkland slumps

THE turmoil in the Middle East and a 50 per cent fall in wool prices has sent Parkland Textile, the Bradford, West Yorkshire, yarn, cloth and clothing group, plunging into losses. The pre-tax loss for the year to March 1 was £3.6 million, compared with a £2.04 million profit. The total payout is slashed to 2.5p (6.7p) with a final dividend of 1p.

Barrymore Spencer, the chairman, said that a £6.7 million investment programme and a restructuring meant the company entered the new year "in more competitive shape".

Bid approach James Smith edges up

SHARES in Quotient, the financial software group, surged by 28p to 118p after it said it had received an approach "which may lead to an offer". Quotient has urged shareholders to take no action, pending the outcome of the talks. Market sources suggest the approach may be from ACT Group, which recently bought 13.1 per cent.

Radio Clyde falls

A DECLINE in advertising took its toll on profits at Radio Clyde, the Scottish radio group quoted on the USM. The group suffered a fall in pre-tax profits from £1.2 million to £707,000 in the six months to end March as turnover slipped from £4.68 million to £3.46 million. Earnings per share fell from 12.2p to 7.3p, although the interim dividend is maintained at 5.2p.

Local advertising revenues, which make up the predominant part of turnover, were down by 5 per cent, but national advertising revenue fell 39 per cent. The company remains confident of medium and long-term prospects.

BT charges plan defended

By ROSS TIEMAN, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

SIR Bryan Carsberg, the director general of telecommunications, has rejected protests that his attempt to increase competition in local telephone services may backfire.

He reaffirmed his commitment to a sharp increase in the charge that British Telecom can levy upon rivals for use of its lines between subscribers and local telephone exchanges.

Sir Bryan also denied that he had been under pressure from the Treasury to brighten British Telecom's prospects so as to increase returns from the sale of the government's remaining 48.5 per cent stake.

The director general was speaking at a press conference called to counter growing pressure from telephone companies for more modest charges.

He appeared to indicate that he would be willing to see a regime under which, on a typical long-distance call within the United Kingdom, 40

per cent of the cost would go to the company that provided the local exchange line links, and only 60 per cent to the company providing the trunk line.

At present, the proportion allocated to the exchange lines is believed to be about 30 per cent.

For Mercury, BT's biggest rival, the increase would be introduced gradually, but new telephone providers would pay the higher charge from day one.

Sir Bryan said his object was to increase competition in the provision of local exchange

lines, where it was sorely needed. He said price structures had hitherto favoured competition to provide long-distance calls only.

He believes that a higher rate of return from local lines would make it more attractive for cable television companies and those developing the new PCN radio-based telephone networks to compete with British Telecom.

Critics argue, however, that competitors will actually face higher costs on the portion of each call handled by BT, and so find the market less attractive.

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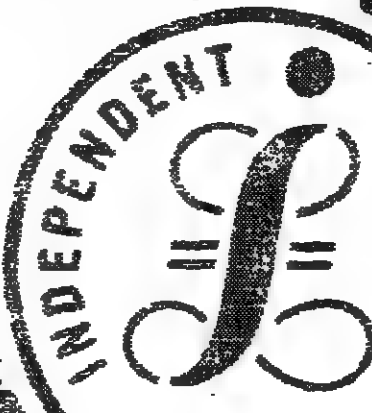
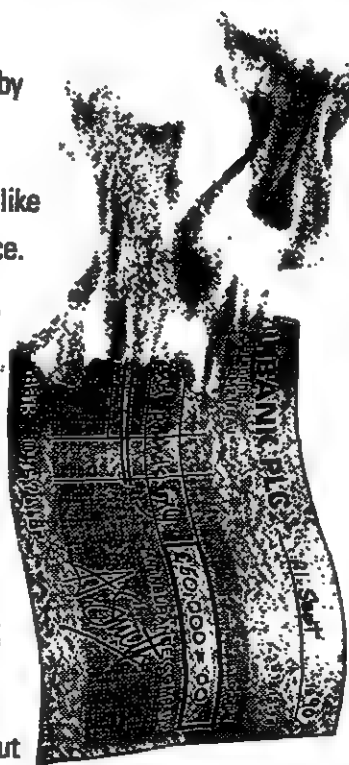
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دعوت الامل

Quick-tempered knight who reshaped steel

BUSINESS PROFILE

By CAROL LEACH

Sir Robert Scholey

The chairman of British Steel can take credit for turning the company into one of the most successful of its kind. But he was passed over for the job three times

Sir Robert Scholey strides into the room and sits on a sofa, and he has a short fuse. Sir Robert's temper is legendary within British Steel. And, after admitting that he does lose it easily, that he can be a bully, he laughs. His laughter is just that little bit too prolonged. Miss Gladwin says that he is a deep thinker. She knows him well. You can see his brain racing ahead as his mouth continues to emit a forced pool of laughter.

"Well," he says finally, "it's something I'm not particularly proud of, but it does happen. I can be very nasty. But, ordinarily, if I have a row with anybody, when it's over, it's over."

There are myths galore about Sir Robert. He has often been the subject of snide comments in the tabloid press for closing steel mills, sometimes in defiance of government wishes, and laying off thousands of employees. He has had to go ex-directory after receiving abusive and threatening telephone calls at his Hertfordshire home.

Sir Robert's abrupt far from charming manner would lead one to assume that he must be inherently thick-skinned. But this is not, he insists, true.

"If thick-skinned implies that I'm insensitive then that's not the case. I manage to shut it out. I'm not sure how. You have to cut yourself off from personal attacks."

British Steel employed 250,000 people when he was first appointed chief executive of British Steel in 1973. That figure has now fallen to 52,000. But it once lost £1 billion a year. In 1989-90 profits rose 21 per cent to £733 million.

British Steel, privatised in 1988, is now the lowest cost producer in Europe, as well as the most profitable, even though, unlike its European competitors, it no longer receives any state aid.

The credit for this extraor-

I can be very nasty. But, ordinarily, if I have a row with anybody, when it's over, it's over



Domestic idyll: Sir Robert and his wife, Joan, in the garden of their Hertfordshire home, a rare moment away from his life at British Steel

inary turnaround is due largely to his management. Yet Sir Robert, a production engineer by training, was passed over no less than three times for the chairmanship. Understandably, it hurt him deeply, and it explains, at least in part, the force that still drives him.

"I was jumped for chairman three times," he says slowly. "By Villiers, MacGregor and then Haskins. I had a pretty unhappy time under Villiers. Mrs Thatcher always felt that anybody who had been in the public sector could never be other than that way minded."

"One thing I have achieved has been to prove that that is not the case."

He finally made it to the head of the boardroom table in 1986 and last year he earned £309,000. His one regret is, he says, that he was unable to bring about the transformation of British Steel "from a horrid caterpillar eating the public cabbage of public expenditure into a beautiful butterfly" ten years earlier.

He clearly sees Mrs Thatcher as the obstacle that caused that regret, even though he has, he says, always voted Conservative and describes himself as akin to Alf Garnett. "The older I get, the more right I become."

"We might not have gotten on that well personally, she clipped me around the ears with her handbag twice, but I can put up with that." And he was, he says, sorry to see Mrs Thatcher go.

"She had her faults, we have all got faults. Big people have big faults, but it is better to be a big person than a small person. I had not written her off as losing the next election. In America they think we are bloody mad."

One begins to see why his nickname, Black Bob, suits him so well and has stuck so long. His sobriquet can be traced back to the black helmet he wore in the steel mills of Cardiff 20 years ago, but it has acquired other connotations along the way.

Sir Robert, tall with a large, over-weight frame, seems happy to see the myth grow. He pretends that he does not know its origin.

"And have you heard the one about son of Frankenstein?" he queries, his obvious enthusiasm for such macho names betraying an almost childlike quality. They clearly appeal to his sense of humour, which is, he says, sharp.

"It can be sarcastic," he adds, "but I try to avoid it. I try to amuse, not offend, and I laugh at myself, often."

Given Sir Robert's still gruelling work schedule, any such light relief must be welcome. He always rises at 6am, is seldom home before 8pm and still puts in a 16-hour day "without batting an eyelid". He goes to bed at

10pm but never falls asleep until midnight.

"That's when I read and I do the Times crossword," he says. "My wife does it too. We pass it backwards and forwards in bed."

Although he has been happily married for almost 45 years — ever since meeting Joan, his wife, on a Sheffield tram — such idyllic domestic scenes seem to be a rarity in Sir Robert's life.

He does not enjoy eating out. Once a 35 cigarettes a day man, he no longer smokes and, for the past three years, has been entirely teetotal.

"It wasn't a medical thing or anything like that, I just came to a view that I would be better off without it. You can now get non-alcoholic wines here and they are perfectly adequate. It's not important."

Sir Robert repeatedly terminates conversations he sees as "not important" with a vague wave of his hand and a "that's that," a "probably" or a "something like that."

His body language is sufficiently forceful to convey the message satisfactorily that any further discussion on that particular subject would, in his opinion, be a total waste of his precious time. If one persists, the conversation becomes entirely one-sided, with Sir Robert's contribution, at best, monosyllabic.

Sir Robert tends, however, only to be dismissive when the subject concerns his personal

life. For he has, in short, devoted his entire life to British Steel. To him it is the only thing that really matters. And although Sir Robert might not be around to oversee them, the changes he has set in motion there will, he says, continue until the end of the decade.

It is "obvious," he says, that there will have to be further rationalisation in Britain.

"We are not in a crisis situation but if you look at the most efficient producers, in Korea, they are producing out of two plants what we produce out of five."

He also foresees a merger with a European producer. "We have said we would like to broaden our base in Germany. Maybe they do not fancy that. It takes two to tango. We will just have to wait until the right guy comes along. We are talking over the next ten years. There is plenty else for us to do in the short term."

Sir Robert admits that his family would probably claim that he had put business before them. "I'm not a good family man," he says. He has two daughters, Frances and Rachel, both married, and two grandchildren. He has, he says, no idea of either Frances' or Rachel's age.

Nor does he know how old his father was when he died. "I don't know how old people are and I don't care," he declares,

his patience clearly tested. "I never bother about dates like that, I think they are totally irrelevant. They don't get me anywhere."

He is, however, a keen amateur historian, and can rattle off the dates of Napoleon's battles without a second thought. "If you are an historian you can read how many situations were dealt with, how mistakes were made, and you can learn a lot from that." This sort of detail, he implies, is more likely to get him somewhere.

For a man who repeatedly describes himself as "just like Alf Garnett," the television character best known as a working class bigot, it is even more surprising to learn that not only is Sir Robert a self-taught historian of some note and fluent in French, he is also a keen marksman and an opera buff with a cultivated taste for Wagner.

A singularly unsentimental man about almost everything else — "I never cry" — he admits to experiencing a "damp eye" whenever he listens to Isolde singing *Liebestod*.

In fact, far from being of working class origin as he might like one to believe, he grew up in a comfortable middle class home in a suburb of Sheffield. His father was a director of a steel company, long ago absorbed into British Steel. And although he grew up during the depression, Sir

Robert, an only child and academically average, clearly remembers having two holidays a year and his parents owning a car.

It is almost as if he deliberately tries to throw people off the track, to stop anyone coming too close. As if, deep down, he does not want people to like him. "You would only get to know him if he wanted you to," the all-knowing Miss Gladwin interjects. If one perseveres, with his compliance, his complex, crusty exterior can be gingerly prised open to reveal an endearing underbelly, so that you suddenly find yourself liking him.

But then, a touch awkward and embarrassed, he realises his exposure, and quickly recovers his composure. He is not in any sense shy but he is, he says, reticent about pushing himself forward. He is the sort of man who is completely incapable of making small talk.

In spite of Miss Gladwin's claim that he has changed, Sir Robert is still extremely set in his ways. She, presumably, has simply become used to it.

"I like everything to be mapped out in my mind, a hell of a long way ahead," Sir Robert explains. "Now that's not everybody's cup of tea. They like to be flexible and sort of muddle along as best they can, but that's not for me. I have my leisure time mapped out until spring next year. The opera, theatre, vacations, everything."

Miss Gladwin confirms that Sir Robert's diary does, indeed, already have bookings as far ahead as October 1992.

And although he is not a religious man — "I'm probably an agnostic, I reserve my rights" — he admits that he has even planned ahead as far as his own funeral.

"I shall have a good funeral, do not worry about that," he says cheerily. "It will be a sort of sing-along-with-Bob." This "sharp" sense of humour is hardly his further explanation.

Sir Robert's energy level is such that he remains hungry for a challenge, despite his advancing years and already ample achievements. His non-executive directorships, with Eurotunnel and the NHS policy board, stand proof.

Asked about his relationship with Eurotunnel's chief executive, Sir Alastair Morton, another man reputed to relish a stimulating argument, Sir Robert, replies: "Oh Alastair, he's an old ally cat. Are they not, then, in any way similar? Oh no, there's nothing feline about me," says Sir Robert, amused by the prospect.

"I'm more of a pit bull terrier." I scrutinise him closely before concluding that he is far too large an animal to be any sort of terrier. I suggest a rottweiler instead. "Well, whatever I am," says Sir Robert, smiling disarmingly, "I'm certainly not a poodle."

Pirelli and Continental agree to talks after Urban's exit

By WOLFGANG MÜNCHAU, EUROPEAN BUSINESS CORRESPONDENT

CONTINENTAL and Pirelli, the European tyre makers, will resume merger negotiations, according to a joint statement.

This follows the dismissal on Thursday of Horst Urban as Continental's chief executive. The German tyre chief was adamantly opposed to a merger between the two companies.

Pirelli proposed a DM2 billion reverse takeover bid for Continental last September. The proposal was rejected by Continental's supervisory and management boards.

Herr Urban has been replaced by Wilhelm Winterstein, a director previously in charge of controlling and logistics. Herr Winterstein will not take the title of chairman of the management board, but that of speaker.

Continental and Pirelli said in the joint statement: "The management boards of Continental and Pirelli have agreed to meet for 'round table' talks to examine the situation. There are no hostile intentions, suggestions or conditions. Both sides view the outcome of the talks as open."



Horst Urban dismissed by Continental on Thursday

Continental said in a separate statement that the departure of Herr Urban was mutually agreed and followed differences over business developments.

SpA. Earlier negotiations between the two companies broke down over disagreements on valuation and voting control. Pirelli has previously insisted on a majority stake in a joint company.

The dismissal of Herr Urban also signals a change of attitude of Continental's workers' representatives, who under German law take 50 per cent of the seats on the supervisory board and who could have blocked the dismissal, which requires a two-thirds majority.

The workers' representatives at Continental have previously supported Herr Urban.

Pirelli SpA, the Milan holding company of Pirelli's tyre and other industrial businesses, announced a fall in consolidated net profits from 1,320 billion (£153 million) to 1,153 billion (£73 as a result of the downturn in the tyre sector, which has affected every international tyre maker.

Overcapacity in the industry and the worldwide downturn in car sales led to the merger talks between Continental and Pirelli in the first place.

Medeva to pay \$77m for drug group

By PHILIP PANGALOS

MEDEVA, the medical research and pharmaceuticals group, has agreed in principle to acquire M.D. Pharmaceuticals for about \$77 million.

Medeva plans to fund the acquisition of MDP, which is privately owned and based in Santa Ana, California, through an issue of shares subject to an open offer to shareholders. The deal is conditional on Medeva shareholders' approval. MDP made

operating profits of \$8.3 million, on sales of \$15.5 million, in the year to end December. Medeva said MDP's sales growth in the first quarter this year has "continued at a substantial rate". Unaudited sales reached \$1.6 million in April.

As chairman, Bernard Taylor, a former chief executive of Glaxo, has nursed Medeva back to health. MDP would represent a large step in

Medeva's planned expansion in the American pharmaceutical market.

Medeva dominates the British vaccine market, with about 90 per cent share by volume and 40 per cent by value, and is a strong player in the generic pharmaceutical market, with a market share of about 30 per cent.

Mr Taylor said: "We have been indicating for some time that we see overseas expansion as a key component of our overall growth strategy."

Medeva's directors intend to seek a listing for the group's American depository receipts on Nasdaq national market system this year.

Mr Taylor said: "Our realignment is now largely completed and... provides a sound basis for our future growth and prosperity."

Medeva shares advanced 3p to 120p.

LONDON TRADED OPTIONS

Option			Call			Put			Option			Call			Put			Option			Call			Put		
Symbol	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Symbol	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Symbol	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
ABN Lines	300	65	85	93	10	14	22		Sweden	110	11	17	-	-	6%	10			300	4	15	23	31	33		
(ASDA)	100	12	17	18	19	20	21		(1118)	120	12	17	18	19	20	21			300	12	17	18	19	20	21	
ASDA	600	17	33	43	45	47	48			120	20	-	-	-	-	16			Reuter	750	91	108	133	9	22	81
(ASDA)	110	16	19	21	23	25	27		Teddybear	240	22	34	38	39	41	24			(7415)	800	42	105	25	43	78	
(ASDA)	130	4	6	8	9	10	11		(750)	300	26	36	38	39	41	24				140	26	30	31	3	4	
(ASDA)	130	4	6	8	9	10	11		Ukraine	300	27	36	38	39	41	24			(R-163)	180	15	20	25	32	19	
(ASDA)	90	73	105	-	-	-	-		Unkown	300	27	36	38	39	41	24				180	15	20	25	32	19	
(ASDA)	105	21	24	-	-	-	-		(750)	360	4	10	16	20	22	53			Smex	80	10	11	12	2	3%	
(ASDA)	105	21	24	-	-	-	-		Unkown	400	97	118	-	-	-	5%			(749)	80	10	11	12	2	3%	
(ASDA)	30	54	62	3	6	2	9		(750)	720	26	48	49	50	29	40				300	4	9%	17	17	18	
(ASDA)	300	26	37	38	39	40	41		Unkown	720	26	48	49	50	29	40				360	18	24	29	37	13	
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WEEKEND MONEY

THE TIMES SATURDAY MAY 11 1991

Edited by Lindsay Cook

Beware of new risky funds

Just as investors might be considering putting money into equities, new types of funds are set to confuse them, and possibly lose all their money into the bargain. From next month, new ultra risky funds will be sold under the name of unit trusts.

Instead of spreading the risk of investing in shares for small investors, these dangerous funds will increase it by borrowing money to invest in futures and options. They will be extremely volatile and should only be used as a very small part of the portfolio of an experienced investor.

Established unit trust groups are horrified that these funds are to be sold with the name unit trust attached. They will be launched in late June, at the same time as a new type of safer unit trust. To add to the potential for disaster, these will have a similar name.

Guaranteed futures and options funds, the safe funds, will invest in a combination of fixed

interest securities and futures and options. By doing so, they will be able to provide a guaranteed return of the sum invested over three or five years, whatever happens to stock markets. The investor will also be able to gain from any rise in the stock market indices. These will be known as futures and options funds (FOFs). Every unit trust house is keen to offer them as soon as the Securities and Investments Board gives the go-ahead. It is hoped they will tempt investors into unit trusts as savings rates are set to dip again.

The dangerous funds will be called geared futures and options funds (GFOFs). It could be possible for inexperienced investors to confuse the two.

Salesmen will be able to sell both the new types of funds by telephone. But they should keep to established investors with the



COMMENT

LINDSAY COOK
WEEKEND MONEY EDITOR

riskier funds. They should also explain the risk to the investors in either a written statement or the fund brochures.

Risk warnings are too often diluted or hidden away. Unit trust companies accept the new funds have a place in the investment market for sophisticated people who understand they can lose money fast. They wish the SIB had made sure the investing public would be able to tell them apart from traditional unit trusts, especially the new, safer ones.

Most of the large unit trust

groups want to keep their distance from the riskier funds, fearing their volatility could tarnish unit trusts in general. There will, however, be nothing to stop small futures and options outfits from running geared funds. They may even try to give themselves a bit of respectability by trying to join the unit trust industry's trade association.

The more organisations of which an investment group is a member, the more investors are prepared to trust their money to them. The Unit Trust Association can claim that no member

has ever gone bust. That cannot be said for futures and options dealers. Unit trusts may not hold that record for much longer either.

Market lead

One of the most important defences against being ripped off in the investment world is knowledge. Too many people invest on a tip, dispensed with wine over a dinner table, without understanding the market or stock they are buying into.

Save & Prosper, which is one of the largest providers of unit trusts, has set itself the task of changing that.

Every month it plans to produce a guide for investors to world markets. It is intended for the group's 400,000 unitholders

and for anyone who wants to learn about markets before they begin to invest.

The researchers and analysts at Save & Prosper will look at Britain, America, Japan, Europe and the Pacific Region and give details of what is happening to these economies, interest rates and the markets.

Weekend Money is assured by the investment house that these reports will be honest appraisals and not marketing-led hype to sell their products. When the markets look overbought, then S&P will tell investors.

In addition, a free telephone service is being provided seven days a week for people who want to know more about major stockmarkets.

Some investors may use the lines cheekily to find out about markets and then invest elsewhere.

S&P knows the risk it is taking. If the company adds to the understanding of existing and potential investors their commitment must be welcomed.

Sara McConnell reports on home loan prizes

Cheap mortgage offer 'misled' over holiday link

Mortgages fixed at a rate of 2.5 per cent (4.4 per cent annual percentage rate) guaranteed for 25 years, were offered to hundreds of thousands of Kent and Sussex residents last month through leaflets in their local newspapers. Anyone hoping to take advantage of the cheap home loans, however, will have been disappointed.

What the leaflet did not spell out was that they would only be able to benefit from these low rates if they joined the newly formed Home Owners Loans & Leisure Society (Holls) and made payments for at least ten years towards holidays. Even then, they would have to wait a further three years before they were eligible for a cheap loan, which would be limited by the size of payments made for holidays.

Mortgages were also offered to members as prizes in the society's quarterly draws. Six months' membership is necessary before they can enter. In addition, the loans would not be eligible for tax relief under the Miras system, as the society is not approved by the Inland Revenue. The society's legal department is now looking at ways of gaining approval.

The society, formed by Douglas Marshall in April, has already withdrawn the leaflets after complaints to trading standards officers in Brighton and Worthing. As yet, Holls has not made any mortgage advances and does not have any members.

The leaflet had requested people to send £5 for an information pack.

Mr Marshall said: "We discarded the forms when people started writing in or phoning, thinking it was a con." He admitted it was misleading.

The Holls leaflet gives the mortgage payments at the flat annual rate of 2.5 per cent on loans of £40,000 and £60,000. These state that the monthly cost over 25 years would be

£216.66 on a £40,000 loan and £325 on a £60,000 loan. The leaflet added that all loans are secured against property, life assurance would be required and that up to 100 per cent of a property's value was available under the scheme.

Those complaining to the society asked how it could offer such low rates, and objected to having to send £5 for more information.

Mr Marshall said the £5 charge for the information pack was to cover administrative costs, particularly the cost of printing the brochure, due out on May 21. The cost

'We discarded the forms when people started writing in, thinking it was a con'

of mortgage money could be kept low because the society would use members' holiday plan contributions to make loans to other members and would not be borrowing money from other sources to lend out. He said: "I see the rate as a management charge not an interest rate."

He denied that the low mortgage rate was a gimmick to attract members and said the main aim of the society would be to give "ordinary working people" the chance to buy cheap holidays for life.

Mr Marshall plans to recruit a salesforce to sell membership and expects to pay them £25 for each member recruited. Membership will be sold door-to-door and at seminars. The campaign will be spread to the Midlands and the north of England.

The society is being set up primarily to buy foreign properties with members' contri-

butions. In theory, members will buy the right to holidays in a range of properties at the time they choose, as well as the chance to win mortgages and cash.

A monthly payments of £21 buys 250 points in the form of "golden holiday bricks" (GHBs) after 120 months. Each GHB costs £100 and is worth ten holiday points. The 250 points buy a "one bedroom luxury apartment/villa sleeping four" for two weeks in low season or one week in high season. The first properties, in Montpellier, France, will not be available until next year, and then only if there are 1,000 members. The more points members buy the larger the choice of times and properties open to them.

So far, 300 people have sent £5 for the brochure. Mr Marshall admitted that the few members there were, the fewer mortgages and other prizes that would be offered.

He predicted that he would have 40,000 members by the end of this year.

But early members could find themselves waiting longer than six months before being able to enter any competition. Meanwhile, their monthly contributions, plus a joining fee of £15 and a monthly membership fee of £3, will be put into a trust fund set up by Mr Marshall.

This money earns no interest. Mr Marshall said it would probably be invested in a Barclays 14-day deposit account. Interest would be used to increase the trust fund. The fund meant members' money was secure, as it needed his and two other signatures to withdraw any money. Mr Marshall said if the company collapsed, all members' money would be refunded, except enrolment and membership fees and maintenance fees for property that remained outside the trust fund. Holls is not required to be a member of any regulatory body, so members would not



Recruiting a salesforce: Mr Marshall plans to spread his campaign to the Midlands and the north of England

be covered by any compensation scheme.

There will be a cooling-off period of 28 days for anyone who joins through the salesforce and a 14-day cooling-off period for those who come directly to the office. People who want to back out of the scheme after they have started making contributions, however, will have to wait until the end of the 13-year term before they can get any money back. If members do not continue paying the £3 monthly fee, they will be refunded the value of their GHBs, but will not qualify for holidays. Holls will also deduct 15 per cent. Those who continue to pay their membership fee will receive the value of their GHBs with no deduction and qualify for holidays.

Holls is assuming that the value of the GHBs will rise about 7 per cent a year as the value of the properties bought by the society rises, although the bricks will still buy the same number of points.

People wanting to cash in their holiday bricks should receive more than they put in. Mr Marshall said, but if the value of the properties falls, the 7 per cent increase could not be guaranteed.

S&P sets challenge on card interest

SAVE & Prosper cut the interest rate on its credit cards this week and challenged other card issuers to follow suit (Lindsay Cook writes).

The investment group cut the rate from 2 per cent a month to 1.9 per cent on its no-fee card and from 1.775 per cent to 1.69 per cent for customers who chose to pay an annual charge of £8. The annual percentage rates (APRs) are 25.3 per cent and 23.7 per cent.

Last week, TSB became the first main card issuer to cut its credit card rate since bank base rates began falling in October. It reduced its Visa rate to 2.2 per cent a month, an APR of 29.8 per cent. Midland set a rate of 28.5 per cent last month. This was to take account of its new annual £10 charge and not lower bank rates.

Ian Lindsey, banking director, said Save & Prosper's new rates for both its Visa and Mastercard credit cards were made in anticipation of further falls in bank base rates. "I expect the High Street banks to follow our lead," he said.

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THE INVESTMENT HOUSE

Society moves ahead of rivals

By LINDSAY COOK
MONEY EDITOR

AS FROM today, new borrowers with the Nationwide Building Society will pay a base mortgage rate of 12.25 per cent. Existing home loan customers have to wait until July 1 to benefit from the 0.7 per cent reduction.

This latest cut means that mortgage payments on a £30,000 endowment loan have declined by £59 since rates began to fall in October. On a £120,000 loan, the reduction is £389, down to £1,054.69 a month.

The second largest society has more than matched the rate of 12.49 per cent for new borrowers being offered by The Mortgage Corporation.

Nationwide also has discounts for larger loans, giving an interest rate of 11.75 per cent for mortgages of more than £60,000 and 11.25 per cent on £120,000 and above.

The society is gambling that the cut at the height of the house buying season will win it new mortgage business, and that bank base rates will come



Impact on market: John Hutchinson of the Nationwide

down before July by at least 0.5 per cent to 11.5 per cent. This would restore the more usual differential between the Nationwide's lending rate and bank base rates.

Other major lenders will not want to look expensive for long and may feel forced to follow Nationwide if they lose

market share. John Hutchinson, retail operations director at the Nationwide, said: "There is only so much time in a year when you can make an impact on the housing market. If bank base rates do not come down it does not matter. It would be more difficult, however, if we are

not joined by other lenders in the next two months."

Lenders have not cut mortgage rates in the past when bank base rates have fallen by 0.5 per cent. In the current competitive market, they are likely to do so to come into line with, or even improve on, Nationwide's mortgage rate.

John Bayliss, Abbey National's managing director, said lenders had moved quickly on base rate cuts recently and would do so again. Abbey would not, however, cut its mortgage rate without a bank base rate cut. "Others may well possibly panic and do it for new borrowers only. We are not going to be panicked."

The Halifax Building Society, the largest mortgage lender, has said it intends to "remain competitive".

On a £60,000 loan, Nationwide's new payments for an endowment mortgage are £514.07 and £554.53 for a repayment mortgage without a bank base rate cut. These compare with £531.58 and £568.22 at the Halifax. Abbey National is currently charging £531.56 and £568.21.

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To open a Premium Reserve account you will need at least £2,000. Unlike many instant access savings accounts, Premium Reserve pays interest four times a year. This means that you can earn interest on your interest. The more you save, of course, the more interest you'll earn, and the top rate of interest is 11.75% p.a. Gross (Gross Compounded Annual Rate of 12.28%). When you wish to withdraw some of your savings, Premium Reserve allows you to do so instantly. No penalties. No fuss. No waiting.

Minimum Balance £2,000	Gross p.a.	Gross Compounded Annual Rate*
£2,000 - £9,999	11.125	11.60
£10,000 - £24,999	11.50	12.01
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Trusts launch rights issues

By MARGARET DIBBEN

THREE investment trust companies, F&C Eurotrust, River & Mercantile Extra Income and TR High Income, have launched rights issues in the past six weeks, a rare event that has occurred only half a dozen times in the past two years.

Until recently, investment trusts always traded at a discount. The downside was they were also sold at a discount. But now, investment trusts are becoming more popular, largely because of their savings schemes, and share prices have risen. In a few cases the discount has become a premium.

The trusts use the proceeds to buy more investments and so become larger and, hopefully, more cost-effective.

Both River & Mercantile and TR shares can be used in a personal equity plan (Pep).

Robin Key, who runs the River & Mercantile Extra Income trust, said: "The way we have structured it, we hope the premium will not be reduced after the rights issue."

James de Saussure, head of investment trusts at Touche Remnant, which runs TR High Income, said: "This is an opportunity for investors to put more money into the marketplace at a cheaper price."

Stephen White, director of F&C Eurotrust, which has had three rights issues, said: "After the previous rights issue in October 1989, the share price went to a discount but soon came back up to net asset value. This year it has been trading at as much as a 16 per cent premium. This is an unhealthy situation because investors are paying more for the shares than they are worth. The only remedy for that is to issue more stock so you come to a good equilibrium between demand and supply."

Transfer values fall as companies raise women's pension age

By SARA MCCONNELL

SOME companies have added five years to the working lives of their female employees by changing their retirement age to 65 in line with male colleagues.

The companies are complying with the ruling on the Barber case in the European Court of Justice a year ago on May 17, that occupational pension schemes had to treat men and women equally in their pensionable ages and benefits.

Women leaving companies that have raised the pension age to 65 could find their transfer value cut by up to 25 per cent.

Colin Evans, senior consultant at Mercer Fraser, the actuary, said: "Companies have the choice either to move pension ages down to 60 or up to 65. The effect of a move to 65 would mean transfer values came down for women."

A woman leaving a company at 46 would now have her benefits paid at 65 instead of 60, which would bring down the transfer value by 25 per cent.

He said that some richer companies were moving towards an equal pension age of 60, but that many were starting to standardise at 65. A survey by the National Association of Pension Funds showed only 22 per cent of companies still have unequal retirement ages for occupational schemes. Other companies are waiting for a government decision on equalising state pension ages.

The government is said to be reluctant to set a retirement age of 60 on the grounds of cost and reluctant to raise the retirement age to 65 for everyone as this would be unpopular.



Test case: Ron Spill says Coloroll has the right mix.

Unequal state retirement ages, levels of guaranteed minimum pension and tax rules mean men and women will continue to receive different pensions even if they are treated the same by their company pension schemes, pension experts say. Men in schemes with a retirement age of 60 still have to wait five years before receiving any state pension.

Hilary Langley, pensions legislation co-ordinator at R Watson, the actuary, said: "There is an incredible problem if the state ages are not the same."

A year after Barber, it is still not clear whether equalisation of benefits should apply to those who retired before May 17, 1990, the date of the judgment. The government is giving financial backing to the

test case. If the schemes had to equalise payments retrospectively at 60, some female employees could find themselves subsidising the benefits of their former male colleagues.

THE Britannia building society is launching a combined personal equity plan and tax exempt special savings account with an initial investment of £11,000. The first £8,000 goes into a feeder account paying 11.25 per cent gross a year for five years. The initial investment and interest feeds the maximum amount into a Tessa every year. The other £3,000 goes into a Pep invested in the Britannia Life balanced growth fund.

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A second guaranteed capital bond will be available between May 13 and May 24 from the Midland Bank. The bond has a minimum investment of £5,000 and is guaranteed to move in line with the FTSE 100 index over five years from June 10. If the index has fallen at the end of five years, the bond guarantees to return the original investment in full. Investments before May 24 will be increased by

0.2 per cent for every complete week between the date of receipt and June 10. The bond will be withdrawn earlier if fully subscribed.

Winners of £50 premium bond prizes will be able to reinvest them after July 1 as long as the maximum holding does not exceed £10,000. John Maples, the Treasury secretary told Parliament this week. Winners will have to return their prize warrants to the bonds and stock office for reinvestment as they will not be able to do this at a post office.

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To accept the Increased Offer you should complete the GREEN Form of Acceptance and return it, together with your share certificate(s) and/or other document(s) of title, by post or by hand, to National Westminster Bank PLC, New Issues Department, PO Box 33, 153/157 Commercial Road, London E1 2DB or, by hand only, to National Westminster Bank PLC, New Issues Department, 2 Princes Street, London EC2 4 as soon as possible, but in any event so as to arrive not later than 1.00 pm on Friday, 17th May, 1991.

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*The Increased Offer is final and will close at 1.00 pm on 17th May, 1991, unless it has by then become unconditional as to acceptances. It will not be increased or otherwise extended, except that Coats Viyella reserves the right to revise or increase or extend the Increased Offer in the event of a competitive situation arising or should the Panel so agree.

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Fidelity Investments

Worm turns on charges for bank overdraft

From Mr P. W. Oliver
Sir, Each week we read of malpractice and sloppy behaviour of banks and it appears no one bank is better than any other. I have never been a person to make waves, paying exorbitant arrangement fees, interest on loans and mortgages etc along with the rest.

This week I was charged a £5 fee for an overdraft of £9.76 caused by a direct debit beating a deposit by 24 hours. The worm turned. I wrote a vitriolic threatening letter and had the usual apologetic reply and the fee credited to my account. Some triumph.

The expression "nice guys finish last" must be the

prevailing rule in modern banking. What a pity I have had to change sides. Yours faithfully, P. W. OLIVER, Mount View, Park Hill, Goldsmith, Penzance, Cornwall.

From Mr John G. Rusling
Sir, The woeful tale of delay and expense recounted by Mrs Sheila Davis (Weekend Money letters, May 4), as she tried to bring order to her son's finances, has thrown some light on my puzzlement. It explains why, notwithstanding the National

Westminster Bank's heavy investment in information technology, and its expensively publicised Touchscreen speedy dealings and special service in British Gas shares, it still takes three weeks for the bank to pay the proceeds of a sale to an account held in the same bank building as the Touchscreen.

It looks as though they're all too busy "researching" and "writing" to act quickly and carefully with customers' money. Yours faithfully, JOHN G. RUSLING, 49 Cairns Road, Sheffield, South Yorkshire.

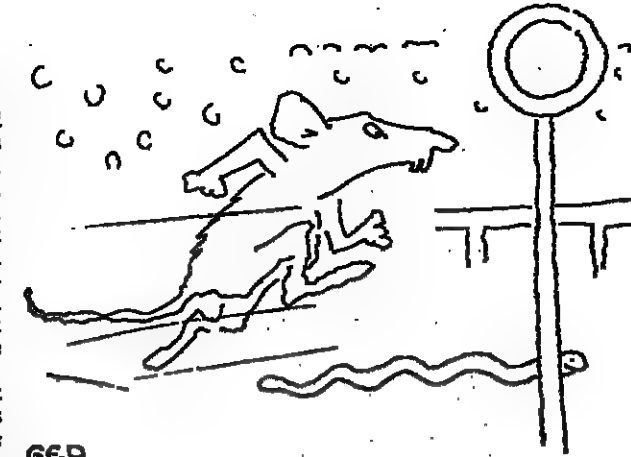
Left at a loss for capital gains tax

From R. G. Robinson
Sir, Dr Beales (Weekend Money letters, April 20) finds it "bizarre" that he is required to submit his tax return within 30 days of the issue date (which was probably April 6), but that he must send with it an insurance company's certificate supporting private health insurance relief, which is not available to him before the end of May.

Yes, indeed, but this is not the only such feature: if he has any capital gains to declare resulting from transactions in the first five days of April, neither he nor the Revenue nor anyone else can ascertain them until the retail price index for that month is declared; about a fortnight after the deadline date for his return.

Apparently, inspectors neither insist on the stated deadline being met by taxpayers nor even expect it. But whether so or not, surely it is absolutely wrong for them to demand the impossible? And if they do, can they properly expect taxpayers' co-operation even at a later date?

Yours faithfully, R. G. ROBINSON, Long View, Limes Lane, Boxed, Uckfield, East Sussex.



GED

Record move

From M. J. Bissmire
Sir, Reading your Weekend Money section on April 13, I find that in the article on purchase of property abroad, you were intending purchasers of French homes to allow two to three months from date of purchase agreement to obtaining possession of the property, and warn against legal costs of 1.5 to 3 per cent of the purchase price.

The columns of your newspaper, to include editorials, have carried a good deal of criticism of the legal profession in the United Kingdom over the last few years. Would you care to comment favourably on the comparison

between British conveyancers and their French counterparts? During the "mad period" of 18 months to two years ago, solicitors happily swapped tales of the fastest completion on record – down to days and in some cases, a matter of hours. As to fees, even the estate agents around here have only just picked up the courage to charge 1.5 per cent.

What happens in 1992 – was there not something about "harmonisation"? I would not want you to think I have an axe to grind – I am a litigation solicitor. Yours faithfully, M. J. BISSMIRE, Bissmire, Fudge & Co, 19 Market Street, Haverfordwest, Dyfed.

Evidence of payment lost

From Mr Gordon Dunn
Sir, Recently I mislaid a used cheque book stub and upon enquiring at my bank found that it would cost well into three figures to obtain photo copies of the paid cheques.

If a bank refuses to return paid cheques it should be compulsory for it to list the names of the payees of all cheques on its bank statements.

How else is one to provide evidence to a third party that a payment has been made? For those who do not fill in cheque book stubs or lose them, how does one know that incorrect account deductions have not been made?

Yours faithfully, GORDON DUNN, 7 Achilbute, Ullapool, Wester Ross.

Auto insurance

From G. I. Linggood
Sir, The AA, expanded of recent years, still looks after the private motorist.

I had to arrange full comprehensive insurance for a new car, driven by one driver, with an impeccable track record – 40 years' experience, no accidents, a £100 waiver etc. On renewal I was surprised to find £425 requested, the company concerned being on the AA list, reason given being "increased costs".

Shortly afterwards I received, from the AA, an exactly similar quotation, again on the AA approved list, for one driver, of £208, a saving of over £200. I congratulate the AA "watchdog" on acting in the interests of the private motorist – where justified.

Yours faithfully, G. I. LINGGOOD, 57 Mulgrave Road, Ealing, London W5.

Letters are welcomed, but The Times regrets it cannot give individual replies or advice. No legal responsibility can be accepted for advice or statements in these columns and independent professional advice should be sought.

MARKETS AROUND THE WORLD
9th MAY 1991

THE VIEW FROM SAVE & PROSPER

UNITED KINGDOM

Market continues to look good value – buy for long term.

- After recent strong gains, the market continues to consolidate.
- We believe there is little risk of significant decline from the present levels.
- There is evidence to suggest that the recession is bottoming, as companies report the situation is no longer worsening.
- Smaller companies remain attractive investments and should outperform their larger counterparts.

Recommended Save & Prosper Funds:
Smaller Companies Income Fund and UK Smaller Companies Growth Fund for continued revival of interest in smaller companies. High Return Unit Trusts as a long term core holding. Also consider Save & Prosper's Managed Portfolio PEP for tax-free investment.

UNITED STATES

Market with strong support – buy on weakness.

- The Federal Reserve eased the discount rate by 0.5% on 30th April as the prospect of an imminent economic recovery appeared to slip.
- Falling inflation and interest rates drove the first phase of the bull market; the US is now experiencing a lull awaiting improved corporate profits to create a second bull phase.
- Market feelings are high and the first quarter has seen a busy time for new issues.
- The Price Earnings ratio is higher than its recent average. However with interest rates falling, the market still represents fair value.

Recommended Save & Prosper Fund:
American Smaller Companies Fund for outperformance of larger companies over the medium term.

JAPAN

Consolidation – begin to nibble.

- Foreigners are calling for a cut in interest rates, but Japanese monetary policy is likely to remain independent of the US. We however, continue to forecast a discount rate cut during the second quarter of 1991.
- Inflation in Tokyo for April, at 3.3% year on year, was better than expected.
- The Japanese economy is now slowing down. Industrial production inventories are up for the eighth consecutive month.
- Market volumes are low due to the recent public holidays and the May company reporting season.

Recommended Save & Prosper Fund:
Japan Growth Fund for continued market recovery.

PACIFIC REGION

Good opportunities for many markets – buy.

- Indecision over the new airport and the US review of 'Most Favoured Nation Status' for China has unnerved the Hong Kong Market.
- There is a prospect of further cuts in interest rates in Hong Kong following on from the cut in US discount rates.
- The Australian market is strong, and expected to rise further as interest rates and inflation both fall.
- The Thai market could move higher with the lifting of martial law and further cuts in interest rates.

Recommended Save & Prosper Fund:
Eastern Discovery Fund for current exposure to Japanese and Australian markets.

EUROPE

Consolidation – buy for long-term growth.

- Declining utilisation of production capacity and shorter order books point to an economic slowdown in Germany. March mechanical engineering orders, for example, were down 20% year on year.
- German wage demands and their inherent impact on inflation is a major deterrent to an interest rate cut. Further increases, however, are not expected.
- Smaller companies are suffering from a major lack of interest and poor liquidity. But over the long term we believe their basic strengths will prevail, creating renewed buying interest.
- By the 3rd/4th quarter of 1991, we should start to see signs of greater scope for inflation, with lower inflation and interest rate cuts fuelling the stock market.

Recommended Save & Prosper Fund:
European Smaller Companies Fund for outperformance over the long term.

This view of world investment markets contains the opinions of Save & Prosper at the time of going to press. It is intended as an information service for investors.

If you would like to know more about Save & Prosper's current views on the world's major stock markets, and how they may affect either your existing investments or your proposed investments with Save & Prosper – just ring 0800 282 101, 9.00 a.m. – 5.30 p.m., seven days a week. Or consult your usual financial adviser.

Employers fail to contribute to portable personal pensions

From Mr Richard Dale
Sir, In common with many, I have decided to entrust my retirement savings to personal pension plans, although my current employer has no occupational scheme.

I took out a personal pension when they were first introduced, whilst I worked for a company which had a pension scheme with a high

employee contribution rate. I also discovered that transfer values from occupational schemes rarely reflected the true worth of being a member of that scheme, although this has improved lately.

Moreover, some pension schemes require a qualification period before membership and most require a stay of two years before any benefits

can be preserved or transferred. Since I am in an occupation that can take advantage of job mobility (computing), company pension schemes are not attractive.

Both my current and previous employers absolutely refused to contribute into my personal pension plan, although they were prepared to contribute on my behalf into the company schemes. In fact, they were completely in opposition to the idea of personal pensions.

I believe that employees are entitled to a contribution to their retirement fund, assuming it is a company benefit, in whatever form the employee chooses, whether it is as a member of the company scheme or as a contribution to a personal pension.

I cannot understand the opposition to personal pensions by employers and believe that they should contribute an equivalent amount into an employee's plan if he so wishes.

For your information, some smaller, newer employers are not setting up schemes but will contribute into personal pensions. It is cheaper for them to do this rather than set up a company scheme.

It would be a pity if legislation has to be introduced to "encourage" employers to contribute, but this may be the only answer.

Yours faithfully, RICHARD DALE, 13a Middle Way, Lewes, East Sussex.

Absent manager

From Mr Peter Mackay
Sir, Can I offer a response to Mrs Katharine Graham (Weekend Money letters, May 5) about absence of bank managers? If Mrs Graham looks deeper into the existence of her bank manager she may find the chap died a few years ago. The staff have not yet told head office and his salary is being shared amongst them. Yours faithfully, PETER MACKAY, 4 Ten Acre Way, Malmesbury, Wiltshire.

INTEREST RATES ROUND-UP

Bank of England 2% 3% 4% 5% 6% 7% 8% 9% 10% 11% 12% 13% 14% 15% 16% 17% 18% 19% 20% 21% 22% 23% 24% 25% 26% 27% 28% 29% 30% 31% 32% 33% 34% 35% 36% 37% 38% 39% 40% 41% 42% 43% 44% 45% 46% 47% 48% 49% 50% 51% 52% 53% 54% 55% 56% 57% 58% 59% 60% 61% 62% 63% 64% 65% 66% 67% 68% 69% 70% 71% 72% 73% 74% 75% 76% 77% 78% 79% 80% 81% 82% 83% 84% 85% 86% 87% 88% 89% 90% 91% 92% 93% 94% 95% 96% 97% 98% 99% 100%

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Bank of England 2% 3% 4% 5% 6% 7% 8% 9% 10% 11% 12% 13% 14% 15% 16% 17% 18% 19% 20% 21% 22% 23% 24% 25% 26% 27% 28% 29% 30% 31% 32% 33% 34% 35% 36% 37% 38% 39% 40% 41% 42% 43% 44% 45% 46% 47% 48% 49% 50% 51% 52% 53% 54% 55% 56% 57% 58% 59% 60% 61% 62% 63% 64% 65% 6

FROM NORMAN HOWELL IN MONACO



ber would fill one with the hope that this time the boys would play football, not headball: that they would have studied their strip sufficiently to avoid passing every single time to their opponent. This optimism was merely justified, yet it never left me. Next year, came the glamour that will surely rub off from renewed contact with Europe, dissemination of another season's worth of such blind faith?

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

TEL ST

[illegible]

Form points to improving Walim

DURING the last two years the Lingfield Derby Trial, sponsored now for the first time by the Maxims Club, has been a good pointer to the Epsom classic in that it has been won by three subsequent Derby winners, Teatono, Slip Anchor and Kahyasi.

Today's field of eight includes Teatono's son, Young Buster, who won his maiden at Newmarket's Craven meeting every bit as easily as did his sire on the corresponding occasion eight years ago.

When a horse wins as easily as that it is because of one of two reasons: either he is very good or the opposition was bad.

In Young Buster's case it is hard to judge since neither the runner-up nor the third have been winners since. However, at Chester on Thursday the fourth Hundra did give the form a boost by winning the Dec Stakes.

What may be more significant is the fact that at Nottingham earlier this season Young Buster was given 7lb and a length beating by Prince Russano, who then finished third behind another of today's field, Walim, in the Newmarket Stakes last Friday.

On that occasion Prince Russano was beaten three-quarters of a length by the opposition was bad.

MANDARIN

MICHAEL SEELY

Walim 3lb over a mile and a quarter.

Since Walim is by the triple crown winner Nijinsky, I feel that today's longer trip should be well within his reach, more especially since he won over ten furlongs as a two-year-old, and he is preferred.

At Newmarket, Walim was ridden by Pat Eddery. Walter Swinburn takes over today because Eddery has been claimed by Khaled Abdulla to partner Froesch.

It remains to be seen whether he has quite such an exciting ride on this easy Bath maiden winner as he enjoyed at Chester on Tuesday when he won the Vase, wearing the same colours on the new Derby favourite Toulon.

Corrupt and Selfkirk, who finished first and second respectively in the Easter Stakes, have a mile at Kempton, re-oppose with Selfkirk now 4lb better off for a two-length beating.

On breeding, Circus Light should be in his element since he is by Kalgowal out of the Oaks winner Circus Flame. However, he was put to rout at Kempton first time out at Peking Opera, who was then beaten at Chester.

In recent years the Marley Roof Tile Oaks Trial has been won by Aliya and Raha, fillies who have gone on to win the Oaks and the French Oaks.

Now I give Michael Stoute and Walter Swinburn a decent chance of winning today's test with Casaparra, whose name went into my notebook last autumn as being one to follow this year.

Having finished ten lengths ahead of the third horse when he was runner-up to Cruchan at Leicester, Kaysaga is now napped to win the Matthew Dawson Maiden Stakes at Newmarket.

MANDARIN	THUNDERER	MICHAEL SEELY
2.00 Dry Point.	2.00 Tauber.	2.00 Dry Point.
2.30 Camptel.	2.30 Young.	3.00 Young Buster.
3.00 Walim.		
3.30 Lamsare.		
4.00 Interrogate.	4.00 Interrogate.	
4.30 Jura.	4.30 Jura.	

Our Newmarket Correspondent: 3.00 Young Buster. 4.00 INTERROGATE (nap).
The Times Private Handicapper's top rating: 3.30 WISTFUL.

GOING: GOOD (GOOD TO FIRM PATCHES) SIS

DRAW: 5F-7F 140YD, HIGH NUMBERS BEST

2.00 PRICE WATERHOUSE HANDICAP (23.3lb; 8) (14 runners)

101 (8)	181400	THORNFIELD BOY	200 (9)	181400	THORNFIELD BOY
102 (10)	181500	AMMO MENOR	201 (10)	181500	AMMO MENOR
103 (12)	181600	ACCESS TRAVEL	202 (12)	181600	ACCESS TRAVEL
104 (14)	181700	TALISMAN	203 (14)	181700	TALISMAN
105 (16)	181800	JOE SUGDEN	204 (16)	181800	JOE SUGDEN
106 (18)	181900	JOE SUGDEN	205 (18)	181900	JOE SUGDEN
107 (20)	182000	JOE SUGDEN	206 (20)	182000	JOE SUGDEN
108 (22)	182100	JOE SUGDEN	207 (22)	182100	JOE SUGDEN
109 (24)	182200	JOE SUGDEN	208 (24)	182200	JOE SUGDEN
110 (26)	182300	JOE SUGDEN	209 (26)	182300	JOE SUGDEN
111 (28)	182400	JOE SUGDEN	210 (28)	182400	JOE SUGDEN
112 (30)	182500	JOE SUGDEN	211 (30)	182500	JOE SUGDEN
113 (32)	182600	JOE SUGDEN	212 (32)	182600	JOE SUGDEN
114 (34)	182700	JOE SUGDEN	213 (34)	182700	JOE SUGDEN
115 (36)	182800	JOE SUGDEN	214 (36)	182800	JOE SUGDEN
116 (38)	182900	JOE SUGDEN	215 (38)	182900	JOE SUGDEN
117 (40)	183000	JOE SUGDEN	216 (40)	183000	JOE SUGDEN
118 (42)	183100	JOE SUGDEN	217 (42)	183100	JOE SUGDEN
119 (44)	183200	JOE SUGDEN	218 (44)	183200	JOE SUGDEN
120 (46)	183300	JOE SUGDEN	219 (46)	183300	JOE SUGDEN
121 (48)	183400	JOE SUGDEN	220 (48)	183400	JOE SUGDEN
122 (50)	183500	JOE SUGDEN	221 (50)	183500	JOE SUGDEN
123 (52)	183600	JOE SUGDEN	222 (52)	183600	JOE SUGDEN
124 (54)	183700	JOE SUGDEN	223 (54)	183700	JOE SUGDEN
125 (56)	183800	JOE SUGDEN	224 (56)	183800	JOE SUGDEN
126 (58)	183900	JOE SUGDEN	225 (58)	183900	JOE SUGDEN
127 (60)	184000	JOE SUGDEN	226 (60)	184000	JOE SUGDEN
128 (62)	184100	JOE SUGDEN	227 (62)	184100	JOE SUGDEN
129 (64)	184200	JOE SUGDEN	228 (64)	184200	JOE SUGDEN
130 (66)	184300	JOE SUGDEN	229 (66)	184300	JOE SUGDEN
131 (68)	184400	JOE SUGDEN	230 (68)	184400	JOE SUGDEN
132 (70)	184500	JOE SUGDEN	231 (70)	184500	JOE SUGDEN
133 (72)	184600	JOE SUGDEN	232 (72)	184600	JOE SUGDEN
134 (74)	184700	JOE SUGDEN	233 (74)	184700	JOE SUGDEN
135 (76)	184800	JOE SUGDEN	234 (76)	184800	JOE SUGDEN
136 (78)	184900	JOE SUGDEN	235 (78)	184900	JOE SUGDEN
137 (80)	185000	JOE SUGDEN	236 (80)	185000	JOE SUGDEN
138 (82)	185100	JOE SUGDEN	237 (82)	185100	JOE SUGDEN
139 (84)	185200	JOE SUGDEN	238 (84)	185200	JOE SUGDEN
140 (86)	185300	JOE SUGDEN	239 (86)	185300	JOE SUGDEN
141 (88)	185400	JOE SUGDEN	240 (88)	185400	JOE SUGDEN
142 (90)	185500	JOE SUGDEN	241 (90)	185500	JOE SUGDEN
143 (92)	185600	JOE SUGDEN	242 (92)	185600	JOE SUGDEN
144 (94)	185700	JOE SUGDEN	243 (94)	185700	JOE SUGDEN
145 (96)	185800	JOE SUGDEN	244 (96)	185800	JOE SUGDEN
146 (98)	185900	JOE SUGDEN	245 (98)	185900	JOE SUGDEN
147 (100)	186000	JOE SUGDEN	246 (100)	186000	JOE SUGDEN
148 (102)	186100	JOE SUGDEN	247 (102)	186100	JOE SUGDEN
149 (104)	186200	JOE SUGDEN	248 (104)	186200	JOE SUGDEN
150 (106)	186300	JOE SUGDEN	249 (106)	186300	JOE SUGDEN
151 (108)	186400	JOE SUGDEN	250 (108)	186400	JOE SUGDEN
152 (110)	186500	JOE SUGDEN	251 (110)	186500	JOE SUGDEN
153 (112)	186600	JOE SUGDEN	252 (112)	186600	JOE SUGDEN
154 (114)	186700	JOE SUGDEN	253 (114)	186700	JOE SUGDEN
155 (116)	186800	JOE SUGDEN	254 (116)	186800	JOE SUGDEN
156 (118)	186900	JOE SUGDEN	255 (118)	186900	JOE SUGDEN
157 (120)	187000	JOE SUGDEN	256 (120)	187000	JOE SUGDEN
158 (122)	187100	JOE SUGDEN	257 (122)	187100	JOE SUGDEN
159 (124)	187200	JOE SUGDEN	258 (124)	187200	JOE SUGDEN
160 (126)	187300	JOE SUGDEN	259 (126)	187300	JOE SUGDEN
161 (128)	187400	JOE SUGDEN	260 (128)	187400	JOE SUGDEN
162 (130)	187500	JOE SUGDEN	261 (130)	187500	JOE SUGDEN
163 (132)	187600	JOE SUGDEN	262 (132)	187600	JOE SUGDEN
164 (134)	187700	JOE SUGDEN	263 (134)	187700	JOE SUGDEN
165 (136)	187800	JOE SUGDEN	264 (136)	187800	JOE SUGDEN
166 (138)	187900	JOE SUGDEN	265 (138)	187900	JOE SUGDEN
167 (140)	188000	JOE SUGDEN	266 (140)	188000	JOE SUGDEN
168 (142)	188100	JOE SUGDEN	267 (142)	188100	JOE SUGDEN
169 (144)	188200	JOE SUGDEN	268 (144)	188200	JOE SUGDEN
170 (146)	188300	JOE SUGDEN	269 (146)	188300	JOE SUGDEN
171 (148)	188400	JOE SUGDEN	270 (148)	188400	JOE SUGDEN
172 (150)	188500	JOE SUGDEN	271 (150)	188500	JOE SUGDEN
173 (152)	188600	JOE SUGDEN	272 (152)	188600	JOE SUGDEN
174 (154)	188700	JOE SUGDEN	273 (154)	188700	JOE SUGDEN
175 (156)	188800	JOE SUGDEN	274 (156)	188800	JOE SUGDEN
176 (158)	188900	JOE SUGDEN	275 (158)	188900	JOE SUGDEN
177 (160)	189000	JOE SUGDEN	276 (160)	189000	JOE SUGDEN
178 (162)	189100	JOE SUGDEN	277 (162)	189100	JOE SUGDEN
179 (164)	189200	JOE SUGDEN	278 (164)	189200	JOE SUGDEN
180 (166)	189300	JOE SUGDEN	279 (166)	189300	JOE SUGDEN
181 (168)	189400	JOE SUGDEN	280 (168)	189400	JOE SUGDEN
182 (170)	189500	JOE SUGDEN	281 (170)	189500	JOE SUGDEN
183 (172)	189600	JOE SUGDEN	282 (172)	189600	JOE SUGDEN
184 (174)	189700	JOE SUGDEN	283 (174)	189700	JOE SUGDEN
185 (176)	189800	JOE SUGDEN	284 (176)	189800	JOE SUGDEN
186 (178)	189900	JOE SUGDEN	285 (178)	189900	JOE SUGDEN
187 (180)	190000	JOE SUGDEN	286 (180)	190000	JOE SUGDEN
188 (182)	190100	JOE SUGDEN	287 (182)	190100	JOE SUGDEN
189 (184)	190200	JOE SUGDEN	288 (184)	190200	JOE SUGDEN
190 (186)	190300	JOE SUGDEN	289 (186)	190300	JOE SUGDEN
191 (188)	190400	JOE SUGDEN	290 (188)	190400	JOE SUGDEN
192 (190)	190500	JOE SUGDEN	291 (190)	190500	JOE SUGDEN
193 (192)	190600	JOE SUGDEN	292 (192)	190600	JOE SUGDEN
194 (194)	190700	JOE SUGDEN	293 (194)	190700	JOE SUGDEN
195 (196)	190800	JOE SUGDEN	294 (196)	190800	JOE SUGDEN
196 (198)	190900	JOE SUGDEN	295 (198)	190900	JOE SUGDEN
197 (200)	191000	JOE SUGDEN	296 (200)	191000	JOE SUGDEN
198 (202)			297 (202)	191100	JOE SUGDEN
199 (204)	191200	JOE SUGDEN	298 (204)	191200	JOE SUGDEN
200 (206)	191300	JOE SUGDEN	299 (206)	191300	JOE SUGDEN
201 (208)	191400	JOE SUGDEN	300 (208)	191400	JOE SUGDEN
202 (210)	191500	JOE SUGDEN	301 (210)	191500	JOE SUGDEN
203 (212)	191600	JOE SUGDEN	302 (212)	191600	JOE SUGDEN
204 (214)	191700	JOE SUGDEN	303 (214)	191700	JOE SUGDEN
205 (216)	191800	JOE SUGDEN	304 (216)	191800	JOE SUGDEN
206 (218)	191900	JOE SUGDEN	305 (218)	191900	JOE SUGDEN
207 (220)	192000	JOE SUGDEN	306 (220)	192000	JOE SUGDEN
208 (222)	192100	JOE SUGDEN	307 (222)	192100	JOE SUGDEN
209 (224)	192200	JOE SUGDEN	308 (224)	192200	JOE SUGDEN
210 (226)	192300	JOE SUGDEN	309 (226)	192300	JOE SUGDEN
211 (228)	192400	JOE SUGDEN	310 (228)	192400	JOE SUGDEN
212 (230)	192500	JOE SUGDEN	311 (230)	192500	JOE SUGDEN
213 (232)	192600	JOE SUGDEN	312 (232)	192600	JOE SUGDEN
214 (234)	192700	JOE SUGDEN	313 (234)	192700	JOE SUGDEN
215 (236)	192800	JOE SUGDEN	314 (236)	192800	JOE SUGDEN
216 (238)	192900	JOE SUGDEN	315 (238)	192900	JOE SUGDEN
217 (240)	193000	JOE SUGDEN	316 (240)	193000	JOE SUGDEN
218 (242)	193100	JOE SUGDEN	317 (242)	193100	JOE SUGDEN
219 (244)	193200	JOE SUGDEN	318 (244)	193200	JOE SUGDEN
220 (246)	193300	JOE SUGDEN	319 (246)	193300	JOE SUGDEN
221 (248)	193400	JOE SUGDEN	320 (248)	193400	JOE SUGDEN
222 (250)	193500	JOE SUGDEN	321 (250)	193500	JOE SUGDEN
223 (252)	193600	JOE SUGDEN	322 (252)	193600	JOE SUGDEN
224 (254)	193700	JOE SUGDEN	323 (254)	193700	JOE SUGDEN
225 (256)	193800	JOE SUGDEN	324 (256)	193800	JOE SUGDEN
226 (258)	193900	JOE SUGDEN	325 (258)	193900	JOE SUGDEN
227 (260)	194000	JOE SUGDEN	326 (260)	194000	JOE SUGDEN
228 (262)	194100	JOE SUGDEN	327 (262)	194100	JOE SUGDEN
229 (264)	194200	JOE SUGDEN	328 (264)	194200	JOE SUGDEN
230 (266)	194300	JOE SUGDEN	329 (266)	194300	JOE SUGDEN
231 (268)	194400	JOE SUGDEN	330 (268)	194400	JOE SUGDEN
232 (270)	194500	JOE SUGDEN	331 (270)	194500	JOE SUGDEN
233 (272)	194600	JOE SUGDEN	332 (272)	194600	JOE SUGDEN
234 (274)	194700	JOE SUGDEN	333 (274)	194700	JOE SUGDEN
235 (276)	194800	JOE SUGDEN	334 (276)	194800	JOE SUGDEN
236 (278)	194900	JOE SUGDEN	335 (278)	194900	JOE SUGDEN
237 (280)	195000	JOE SUGDEN	336 (280)	195000	JOE SUGDEN
238 (282)	195100	JOE SUGDEN	337 (282)	195100	JOE SUGDEN
239 (284)	195200	JOE SUGDEN	338 (284)	195200	JOE SUGDEN
240 (286)	195300	JOE SUGDEN	339 (286)	195300	JOE SUGDEN
241 (288)	195400	JOE SUGDEN	340 (288)	195400	JOE SUGDEN
242 (290)	195500	JOE SUGDEN	341 (290)	195500	JOE SUGDEN
243 (292)	195600	JOE SUGDEN	342 (292)	195600	JOE SUGDEN
244 (294)	195700	JOE SUGDEN	343 (294)	195700	JOE SUGDEN
245 (296)	195800	JOE SUGDEN	344 (296)	195800	JOE SUGDEN
246 (298)	195900	JOE SUGDEN	345 (298)	195900	JOE SUGDEN
247 (300)	196000	JOE SUGDEN	346 (300)	196000	JOE SUGDEN
248 (302)			347 (302)	196100	JOE SUGDEN

BETTING: 41 Access Travel, 9-2 Day Dream, 5-1 Gornikay, 5-1 Tauber, 7-1 Assignment, 6-1 Prijs, 10-1 Joe Sugden
1-21 Angelo Mame, 1-41 others.



Winner is set for a weekend of tennis

The Times today presents the chance to win a luxury weekend for two people in London, highlighted by two days of the best tennis of the year - the semi-finals and final of the Stella Artois men's championships on the grass courts at Queen's Club, Kensington, on June 15 and 16.

We have joined with the sponsors to offer this special package for the competition winner and a friend:

First-class return rail travel to and from London; champagne lunch and tea at Queen's on the Saturday and Sunday; tickets for *Aspects of Love* at the Prince of Wales Theatre and theatre supper on the Saturday evening, with overnight accommodation at the Chelsea Hotel.

The Stella Artois event is not just the grass-court championship; it is a leading tournament in its own right, with £286,000 prize-money. The entry this year includes Stefan Edberg, Ivan Lendl, Pete Sampras, Michael Chang, Pat Cash and Tim Mayotte.

This competition is open to readers who are aged 18 years or more.

To enter, study the questions below, write your answers on the entry form and send it (to arrive by Monday, May 20) to:

Stella Artois competition, Sports Department, The Times, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN.

The winner will be the sender of the first correct entry drawn from all those received by May 20.

THE QUESTIONS

1. Who won the Stella Artois singles championship last year?
2. Who are the holders of the Davis Cup?
3. Who won the men's doubles championship at Wimbledon last year?
4. Who was the last player to win the singles at Queen's and Wimbledon in the same year?
5. Who is the highest-placed British man in the ATP rankings, at May 11, 1991?

ENTRY FORM

Name _____
Address _____
Telephone _____

ANSWERS

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

CONDITIONS OF ENTRY: Entries (and their relatives) of Times Newspapers Ltd. will be accepted for the competition. The competition is open to all who are aged 18 years or more. No correspondence can be entered into.

Dexter delivers a mixed review of Botham's efforts

By ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT

WORCESTER (second day of four): Lancashire, with eight first-innings wickets in hand, are 124 runs behind Worcestershire.

THERE were 12 international players, past and present, on show at New Road yesterday and two powerful county sides were locking horns in an intense four-day game. Yet the talk was virtually all about Ian Botham and the renewed speculation of an England comeback was naturally heightened by the timely appearance of Ted Dexter.

Equally naturally, the chairman of the England committee was at pains to dismiss the notion that he had made his journey either because of Botham's first-day century, or with only Botham in mind. There were, he said, any number of players he wished to see, and anyway, was there anyone in the game not at present staking his England claim?

Dexter was well aware the matter would not rest there, however, and as he watched the nation's enduring hero compete an unbroken and distinctly unlucky 16-over spell of medium-pace swing and seam, he gave some guarded encouragement to those who cling to the belief that only one man can restore English pride.

The Dexter system was to hand out bouquets and bars alternately. So, "it is very good to see him get runs again," was followed sharply by, "not before time, I should have said." And, after "he has bowled well and made the ball move," came, "but he seems to still have plenty of weight on."

Pressed on whether Botham's inclusion would require a radical change in selection policy, Dexter said: "It would be a change of direction because he has not been picked for two years, but I don't think anyone would have been picking him on the performances he was putting in."

"Clearly, he now has to be considered a batsman who bowls and he first has to prove that he can do that job for Worcestershire. But if his innings here is a measure of new determination to concentrate, of real desire, real will, that is very good news."

Dexter also disclosed that the selection of England's team of 13 for the Texaco Trophy is to be delayed, curiously, because the captain, Graham Gooch, is unavailable to pick it next Tuesday. The team will not now be finalised until the next round of championship games has begun.

All-round excellence from Pigott swings the initiative

By JACK BAILEY

LORDS (second day of four): Middlesex, with seven second-innings wickets in hand, are 103 runs behind Sussex.

TONY PIGOTT is having quite a match. His five wickets in the Middlesex first innings were followed yesterday by an innings of 65 runs which prevented his team from losing the hard-earned advantage established by Smith's 90 and a stalwart innings by Wells. Then, after Sussex had finally established a lead of 149 runs, gathering maximum points while Wells reached 120, Pigott was again in a starring role.

Now he changed in from the Nursery End, had Roseberry caught at second slip in his first over and, in his second, brought a sad end to a sad day for Gattling by removing his off stump. With Hutchinson falling to Jones, it had, all in all, been a rough day for the champions at the hands of those who hold the wooden spoon. And they have a long haul ahead.

The handsome lead established by Sussex, as they batted through all but 17 of the day's

Alleyne comes to the rescue and leaves Barlow beaming

By IVO TENNANT

BRISTOL (second day of four): Gloucestershire, with two first-innings wickets in hand, are 13 runs ahead of Hampshire.

AFTER losing four wickets relatively cheaply and hardly looking as if they would avert the follow-on, Gloucestershire played some capital cricket yesterday. Mark Alleyne and Jack Russell, who made 79 and an unbeaten 71 respectively, gave them an advantage over Hampshire in a match that will need a fourth day.

Last weekend, Alleyne was reprimanded for bowling a bouncer in a Sunday league match. Now, his cricket was nothing if not responsible, to the evident satisfaction of Eddie Barlow, Gloucestershire's coach. It need hardly be added

Prichard takes a heavy toll

By GEOFFREY WHEELER

NOTTS v Leics

Even though the contest between bat and ball is demonstrably more even than at the same stage last season, yesterday still produced four individual three-figure scores, Paul Prichard, of Essex, leading the way with 190 against Northamptonshire.

Prichard took full advantage of an attack handicapped by the absence through injury of Nick Cook and Eldine Baptiste, the latter having dismissed both Gooch, with a brilliant return catch, and Salim Malik before going off. Prichard, 98 of whose runs came from boundaries, and Derek Pringle put on 166 for the sixth wicket and Essex, at 428 for seven, led by a hundred.

Monotony is due to monopoly

By KEN LAWRENCE

A SURPRISING new word is cropping up among those who follow motor racing and it has nothing to do with G-forces, tyres or aerodynamics. It seems that you cannot discuss Formula One any longer without this six-letter word being uttered. It is, of course, *monotony*.

What is suddenly becoming unacceptable is the fact that what has turned into a two-man procession is now a one-man show. Even with the Monaco Grand Prix due to be raced tomorrow (BBC1, 1.45pm) that word is still reverberating.

Since 1984 Scania and Alain Prost have dominated. Tomorrow the Brazilian goes for his fourth successive victory in the principality. Which is why the cognoscenti are complaining of boredom.

It is good to report, therefore that on Monday, Screensport (7pm) launch a new series of Formula One films recounting the days when racers raced and the modern paraphernalia that made the car a more important ingredient than the driver, lay ahead.

First in the series, entitled *The Unworn Champion*.



Going through the paces: Curry Ambrose unleashes an express delivery as the West Indies enjoyed the first practice of their tour in the nets at Lord's yesterday

Donald's pace a powerful weapon

By RICHARD STREETON

HEADINGLEY (second day of four): Warwickshire, with seven second-innings wickets in hand, are 176 runs ahead of Yorkshire.

NINE wickets fell for 65 runs yesterday when the Yorkshire innings was destroyed by speed and accuracy from Allan Donald and Tim Munton. Warwickshire, who gained a first-innings lead of 103, lost three wickets in poor light during the final period but they finished in a strong position.

Donald, the South African, retained by Warwickshire as their overseas player, in preference to Moody, the Australian batsman, generated remarkable pace on a slow pitch and finished with figures of five for 42.

Munton's stamina and control were also impressive, as three-quarters of an hour before lunch, he started a spell of 24 overs unchanged, during which he took four for 42.

In several ways the pattern of events was similar to the previous day when Warwickshire also reached three-figures before they collapsed. The difference, though, was that this time there was no fightback by the Yorkshire batsmen and for tea Yorkshire were all out. The occasional ball moved off the seam but overall the batting lacked conviction.

Lloyd used Donald in short bursts and each time he achieved the breakthrough his captain sought. Small's direction was poor but he was seldom expensive and Smith and Reeve also played their part at the other end. Munton, who had finished with four for 37 from 20 overs, a great-hearted effort.

It was Donald's sheer pace, however, that left everyone unprepared. It was a surprise, unnecessary for him, though, to a great Mark Robinson with a short ball that rose nastily. Robinson, whose career batting average is 2.00, is the least successful No. 11 in the county game.

The incident almost certainly had its origins from the previous evening when Robinson had unwisely bowled short at both Munton and Donald.

Rob White, the umpire, intervened and awarded a no-ball. Lloyd and the umpire spoke later in the over, the captain presumably not being clear on what had happened. Robinson was left before a Donald in the last bowler's next over.

Until lunch, Yorkshire hinted that they might build a useful first-innings lead. Donald had Moxon well taken at first slip by holes in his first spell before Munton and Byers put on an untroubled 82 for the second wicket in 30 overs.

The left-handed Byes has settled well into the No. 3 position this season but shortly before the interval he was deceived by Reeve's late movement.

Donald caused Blakey to mistake a catch to cover and defeated Phil Robinson by his pace immediately after the break and the collapse had occurred. Munton had been in 48 overs when he was fifth out, left before to Munton.

The same bowler followed with the wickets of Kellian, who offered no stroke, and Pickles before Donald returned and the innings ended rapidly.

SPORT ON TELEVISION

THE WEEK IN VIEW

goes back to 1970 and the days of debonair drivers like Graham Hill, when they still had flag starts. It was a season marked by two tragedies. Piers Courage died at Silverstone and A.J. Foyt, who was a victim of a crash, died at the race. Jochen Rindt went out for practice the day before the race and went straight on where he should have turned right. The car crashed and broke up. Rindt was killed on a stretcher - already dead.

"He had a won a world championship," says the voice-over, "but the manner of his winning it illustrates the randomness of human experience. The normal continuum of human events has a beginning and an end."

For Rindt this was the end. Three races were left and were raced, but Rindt became motor racing's only posthumous champion.

THE WEEK'S HIGHLIGHTS

TODAY: Dave Mackay's defence of his IBF world flyweight title against Pedro Falciano comes live from Belfast (BBC1, 8.55pm). There are four races from Newmarket (Channel 4, 3.05pm) and three from Lingfield on BBC1. The Middlesex can be seen on Grandstand and then on BBC2. Screensport has the carriage driving championships at the Royal Windsor Horse Show (11pm).

TOMORROW: The Monaco Grand Prix is live in Sunday Grandstand (BBC1, 11.00pm) and the whole race on the Sky Sports channel (8pm). Rugby league's Premiership final is in Grandstand.

MONDAY: The British Open tennis starts on the Sports channel (2.5pm) while *The Unworn Champion* is pure nostalgia - Jochen Rindt and the 1970 motor racing season remembered (Screensport, 7pm).

TUESDAY: Racing from the superb York course (Channel 4, 4.30pm) and five tennis from Rome on the Sports channel (2pm). Live boxing (8pm) and live cycling as the tour of Britain reaches 4.30pm on Screensport.

WEDNESDAY: Manchester United take on Barcelona in Rotterdam in the European Cup Winners' Cup final. ITV is live at 7.10; there are highlights on BBC1 at 10.30 in Sportstar.

THURSDAY: More York racing (2.30) on Channel 4. A morning on Screensport (4.30) and Italian tennis on the Sports channel (2pm). Screensport has an hour's preview of the Indy 500 (7pm) and BBC2 has a repeat of weekend's Little League, *Fishing the Hard Way* (10.15pm).

FRIDAY: Second clash in four nights, Steve Davis and Stephen Hendry in the Masters final (League of the Sports channel, 6pm).

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Waddle and Beardsley return to England squad

Rejected pair are suddenly back in Taylor's favour

By STUART JONES, FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT

THE international football careers of Peter Beardsley and Chris Waddle, apparently curtailed last month, have been resurrected. The 30-year-olds, excluded from the European championship qualifying tie in Turkey, were yesterday included in the squad for the international against the Soviet Union at Wembley on May 21.

They cannot assume, though, that they will necessarily be recalled for long. They have evidently been brought back to fill the gaps left by Steve McMahon and Trevor Steven, who are injured, and Paul Gascoigne and Steve Hodge, who will be involved in the FA Cup final three days earlier.

Nevertheless, their reappearances represent another unpredictable twist in the selections of Graham Taylor. In omitting Beardsley and Waddle as well as Bryan Robson a fortnight ago, En-

gland's manager indicated that his revolution would start during the last competitive game of the season. The timing seemed dangerously premature and the gamble almost failed.

Although he was prepared then to risk England's place in the finals of the European championship, he is clearly more concerned now with protecting his unbeaten record that with extending his experimentation. He regards the Soviet Union as one of the Continent's strongest sides.

The omission of Waddle was particularly controversial. Having inspired Marseille to the final of the European Cup, Waddle is regarded as a leading candidate for the year. Moreover, he was protecting his unbeaten record that with extending his experimentation. He regards the Soviet Union as one of the Continent's strongest sides.

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ENGLAND TEAMS

ENGLAND (vs Soviet Union, May 21): G. Le Tissier (Reading), M. Walters (Reading), D. Gordon (Norwich City), A. Coates (Norwich City), D. Hirst (Sheff Wed), B. Deane (Sheff Wed), S. Slater (West Ham), S. Bould (Aston Villa), M. Wright (Derby County), A. Adams (Aston Villa), D. Batty (Leeds), G. Thomas (Crystal Palace), P. Davis (Aston Villa), N. Waddle (Middlesbrough), D. Wicks (Aston Villa), D. Platt (Aston Villa), J. Barnes (Liverpool), A. Smith (Aston Villa), C. Waddle (Middlesbrough), I. Wright (Crystal Palace), L. Sharpe (Middlesbrough), P. Beardsley (Liverpool).

ENGLAND (vs Switzerland, May 23): N. Merritt (Crystal Palace), D. James (Wolves), K. Johnson (Wolves), P. Elliott (Sheff Wed), E. Barrett (Sheff Wed), K. Curle (Wolves), P. King (Sheff Wed), A. Berlow (Aston Villa), I. Bishop (West Ham), C. Palmer (Sheff Wed), T. Sherwood (Norwich City), J. Bannister (Norwich City), G. Le Tissier (Reading), M. Walters (Reading), D. Gordon (Norwich City), A. Coates (Norwich City), D. Hirst (Sheff Wed), B. Deane (Sheff Wed), S. Slater (West Ham), S. Bould (Aston Villa), M. Wright (Derby County), A. Adams (Aston Villa), D. Batty (Leeds), G. Thomas (Crystal Palace), P. Davis (Aston Villa), N. Waddle (Middlesbrough), D. Wicks (Aston Villa), D. Platt (Aston Villa), J. Barnes (Liverpool), A. Smith (Aston Villa), C. Waddle (Middlesbrough), I. Wright (Crystal Palace), L. Sharpe (Middlesbrough), P. Beardsley (Liverpool).

Venglos's tenure may end

ASTON Villa's experiment with Jozef Venglos, the former Czechoslovak national coach and the first foreigner to manage a first division team, is likely to come to an end after the match against Chelsea at Villa Park today (Dennis Shaw writes).

Venglos will then accompany the team on a tour of Malaysia but all the signs are

that he will be replaced before the start of next season. Venglos said yesterday that he would make a decision about his future "before the end of the month".

Doug Ellis, the chairman of the club, is believed to be already considering his options, with the names of Neil Warnock (Notts County), Bruce Rioch (Millwall) and

Arthur Cox (Derby County) on the list of possibilities.

Derek Pavin, the chairman of Notts County, said he would fight to keep Warnock but ominously expressed dissatisfaction at the supporters' response to County's achievement in reaching the second division promotion play-offs.

Ryan's showdown, page 39



WINNER takes all: George Graham (above) was yesterday named as the manager of the year for the second time in three years (Stuart Jones writes). He will receive the trophy and a cheque for £5,000, donated by Barclays Bank, at Highbury today before Arsenal's last fixture of the season against Coventry.

"It is a great honour," Graham said, "because it signifies that you are at the top of your profession. I'm especially pleased to have won it again because it proves that I wasn't a one-season wonder."

"I want to win it again next season as well," Graham said after the launch of Arsenal's £16.5-million bond scheme. Having assembled the best team, the club is now planning, with the help of its supporters, to build the best stadium.

Arsenal announce plans to fund £20m upgrading

By JONATHAN PRYNN

FOUR days after clinching the first division championship, Arsenal have unveiled details of an ambitious fund-raising exercise to finance the upgrading of their Highbury stadium required by the Taylor Report.

The club needs to raise £20 million to construct a stand on the site of the north bank terraces and convert other terraces to seating. The Taylor Report requires English Football League stadiums to meet safety requirements by 1994.

Arsenal will raise the bulk of the money by issuing 12,120 non-interest bearing debenture bonds, each giving the holder rights for up to 150 years to purchase a season ticket for a named seat in the new north stand.

Peter Hill-Wood, the chairman of Arsenal, said that the project "meets the aims of the football club and the aims of the supporters. It will make them all feel very much part of the club for the future."

The debenture bond issue was selected after a range of proposals were considered by the Arsenal board. All other options were felt to compromise the traditions of the club, or limit the resources available to the manager, George Graham, to develop the team. Hill-Wood said that the club had looked at the possibility of ground sharing, but the club at Highbury on the fringes of London. However, these were all rejected for practical reasons and because "Highbury is the ancestral home of Arsenal FC."

The construction of the seating areas will reduce the capacity at Highbury from 44,397 to about 37,000, this season's average gate. During the 1992-3 season, when the north stand is under construction, capacity will be reduced to 29,000.

The scheme looks likely to set a trend among other League football clubs facing massive financial demands for ground improvements. Although Manchester United have come out in favour of stock market flotation, this is not thought likely to prove a popular option for other clubs.

Arsenal also plan to improve the facilities at Highbury. The north stand is expected to offer a range of food and drink shops, a museum and closed-circuit television coverage of the match in progress. Bondholders will even enjoy access to a canteen.

Two classes of bonds are being issued, 7,920 A bonds at £1,500 each and 4,200 B bonds at £1,100 each, reflecting the position of the seat. The bonds will be allocated on a first come, first served basis, with season ticket holders receiving preference. Bondholders will be entitled to buy season tickets at a discount.

□ Hummel International, the Danish sportswear manufacturer, yesterday dropped its claim for a High Court injunction to force Tottenham Hotspur to wear its strip in next week's FA Cup final at Wembley.

United return unsold Rotterdam tickets

MANCHESTER United are expecting to return 3,000 of their 15,000 tickets for the potentially combustible Cup Winners' Cup final against Barcelona, although police are expecting 20,000 supporters to travel to Rotterdam, more than followed England in the 1990 World Cup (John Goodbody writes).

The Dutch police have warned that supporters arriving without tickets risk being turned back. Many United supporters had boycotted the ticket allocation because originally United insisted that

they would part of the organised packages only. However, United have eased their restrictions and have been prepared to release tickets to supporters able to produce travel documents and passports, although have been monitored against a list of known troublemakers.

A few hoodlums have already been identified as expecting to make the trip. The Netherlands and their movements will be "scrutinized in a massive operation by the British and Dutch police."

South Africans wait in shadows

From DAVID POWELL, ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT, CAPE TOWN

A SHADOWY figure in hat, coat and sunglasses moves uneasily around the spectator areas of the track at Stellenbosch. It is a night meeting, and the glasses are the clue that he has something to hide. Beneath the disguise, Jantjie Marthinus is sampling life on the other side of the fence. So this is athletics with the South African Amateur Athletic Union (SAAAU); this is where the competition, the coaching, the sponsorship are.

Such clandestine behaviour is necessary to avoid being recognised and incurring the displeasure of the South African Amateur Athletics Board (SAAAB); to have been seen on television supporting the opposition would have meant certain expulsion.

Marthinus is a teacher whose hobby is running. He knows he must jump the fence permanently if he is to develop his potential as an 800

metres runner. Over he goes and the trouble begins.

He runs his first race and the result appears in the papers. "That was on the Saturday and on the Monday the teachers called a staff meeting and told me I could not coach athletes at school any more," Marthinus says. "They said I was in the fold of the establishment sports bodies, so they banned me."

This is the acrimony that exists between the comfortably-off SAAAU, run by whites, and the impoverished SAAAB, run by Coloureds and affiliated to the South African Council on Sport (Sacos). The SAAAB complains that SAAAU athletes have all the advantages; any team recognised to international competition now would comprise almost exclusively SAAAU-raised athletes.

The SAAAB is arguing to the International Amateur Athletic Association (IAAF) delegation, which tomorrow conclude their five-day assessment of South Africa's case for

readmission, that parity of opportunity should be in place before the step is taken. The athletes who ask you to send training schedules back from Britain are in SAAAB not the union. The SAAAU has promised a development programme but the SAAAB is suspicious.

Marthinus, aged 27 and Coloured, has improved to 1min 46.60sec since jumping sides. His best as a SAAAB athlete was 1min 52sec. "That evening at Stellenbosch they ran 1min 46 and I knew that I had to be at their next meeting," he says.

Johan Landsman, though, is the one of whom the greatest things are expected. "He can break the world record for 1500 metres," McGee says. He has improved from 3min 42sec at the start of the season to 3min 36.30sec and from

1min 48sec to 1min 45.63sec for 800 metres.

Every time he races, Landsman has to run alone. There is no one to push him. "I know that once I have learned the experience of pain, that I will break the world record," Landsman says.

Landsman, too, has jumped sides and has had to move universities from Western Cape to Stellenbosch because only Sacos athletes are permitted to train there.

The IAAF delegation is losing patience with the SAAAB's complaints of unequal opportunity. It visited a smart facility in Cape Town which could be used only by Sacos athletes. "It is not a change of attitude," Lamine Diack, the head of delegation, told Harry Hendricks, the president of SAAAB.

Faldo flops with his new clubs

From MITCHELL PLATT, GOLF CORRESPONDENT, MADRID

SEVERIANO Ballesteros yesterday forfeited the lead in the Spanish Open here on the Club de Campo course as Nick Faldo failed for the first time in five years to survive a halfway cut on the PGA European Tour.

Ballesteros took four putts on the 18th green, leaving the way clear for Eduardo Romero, of Argentina, to forge ahead with an outstanding second round of 63 for a halfway total of 131, which is 13 under par. Ballesteros, who scored 70, is now two shots adrift.

The Spaniard was less than amused at being disturbed on several occasions by photographers, although his disappointment was a pale thing compared with that of Faldo, who followed a first round of

73 with a 75. Faldo had not missed a halfway cut since the German Open in 1986. "My short game is terrible," Faldo said. "I have to admit my game is rough. I will need to work hard to get it right."

It is most likely a mere coincidence that Faldo was, for the first time, playing with a new set of clubs, following his decision to switch from Wilson to Mizuno. He is short of competition this season, having played only 17 rounds. Indeed, he has probably played fewer tournaments than any other leading professional since his success in the Open last July, since he was compelled to withdraw from several events last year because of the need to rest a wrist injury.

Romero overhauled Ballesteros with a marvellous exhibition of skill. He drove the ball well and his putting was more positive than it has been so far this season. Four of his birdie putts were in excess of six yards.

Romero has won tournaments in Europe in each of the last two seasons, during which he has impressed his peers not only with the standard of his play but also his strength of character. He is unflappable.

As is well known, Ballesteros struggles on occasions to keep his composure and his concentration. Yesterday he found, not for the first time, the photographers had an opening attack.

"The officials must make sure the photographers know not to move around and click their cameras when we are swinging," Ballesteros said. It is questionable if any photographer was to blame for Ballesteros taking four putts on the last green when he

failed twice to hole from inside two feet. There were, however, other occasions during the round when he was disturbed. Even so, he would do as well to make light of the matter.

Glen Day, of the United States, scored 67 to move into third place, although he is six shots behind Romero. Day, aged 25, from Oklahoma, is playing in Europe for the first time.

Steve Richardson, the leader of the Volvo Order of Merit this season, recovered from his opening round of 75 with a fine 69 but Ronan Rafferty, playing alongside him, made a premature departure following a 76. Thus Rafferty failed to equal the record, held by Neil Coles, of playing 56 European tournaments without missing a cut.

Results, page 39

Barletta's chairman makes winners of losers

As the unending row about amateurism rumbles on, I would like the Rugby Football Union to meditate on the true beauties of professionalism, as exemplified by the Italian second division club, Barletta, which is based near Bari in the deep south.

Barletta, I am sad to say, face the ever-approaching threat of relegation. After they had lost their fourth game on the trot, the club president, Signor di Cosola, burst into the players' dressing-room wreathed in smiles and carrying his cheque book in his hand. A very generous exhibition, he told the bewildered footballers. He was so impressed by the generosity that he proposed to respond with generosity of his own: he would pay them all their win bonuses as if the team, had in fact, been victorious.

Later Gabrielli, the captain, and his colleague Strappa, went to speak to di Cosola. Gabrielli said: "Thank you for appreciate. But we cannot

accept the bonus, because we did not give the fans the points which they expected and deserved. From today until the end of the championship, we will renounce all bonuses that we are due to us. Put them aside if we secure, as we hope, the safety of Barletta."

Di Cosola was greatly moved by this, as well he might be. "I shall add a further £150,000 to the bonus pool to celebrate our salvation," he said. Why does this sort of thing never happen at Watford and Leicester?

Barletta's fair tune

Barletta have won the GM Vauxhall Conference and thus ascend to the Football League. At the church of St John the Baptist, Chipping Barnet, the choir

boys altered the words on their music sheets in celebration, and this week sang the anthem: "Barnet has gone up with a triumphant shout."

Boston ahead

We live in an age of instant technology. Which makes it all the more exasperating when that magic hardware fails to deliver. The London Marathon is one of the great organisational challenges in sport, and one to which the event rises year after year — except that they still cannot get the result sheets out on time. Six hours after the winners had crossed the line, the results list contained but 50 runners. This was perfect frustration for the media people, covering runners from 600 nations. The event had the services of the computer giant, Unisys, and had previously worked with Olivetti and Tandem. Despite all this wizardry and might, they have never produced rapid results.

The Real favourite

□ The favourite for the post of coach to Real Madrid next season is Francisco Manzanera. He's already resigned as MP

in Colombia to take up the position.

Nanny knows best

One of the great unfortunates of English life is why anyone should prefer one football club to another. How does it all start? The footy magazine *When Saturday Comes* has investigated the matter with a questionnaire. The cream of the offerings come from Chelsea supporters, four of whom give their reasons for becoming Chelsea junkies as follows: "Friends were Chelsea. I was Arsenal but they beat me up." "I like the record Blue is the Colour." "Reputation of the fans." "Our nanny gave me the Chelsea Submarine team."

The crooked finger

Anyone who chooses to stand as umpire in a League cricket fixture — a game far more intense than any Test match — has my sympathy. He's also likely to get something like £8 for doing so. But such vast fortunes

have attracted the interest of the Inland Revenue. Cricket leagues have been asked to supply their lists of umpires, and the Revenue has taken the stance that match fees are income and should therefore be declared. Perhaps this is a long-term plot to wipe out all competitive cricket in the country. How much does it cost to collect the tax on £8, I wonder? Umping fees are taxable, so there is no getting out of declaring them now. However, there is light at the end of the tunnel. I am informed that an average umpire can claim legitimate expenses of around £130 a year, not counting travel — rather more than most umpires will earn in a season, in fact. This is the column that supports Our Umpires — and with the way, chaps, when *Ten* irregulars shout "How's that?" at you tomorrow, please raise your right index finger unquestioningly.

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For investments of £5,000 or more	12.25%	12.25%	12.25%	12.25%
For investments of £2,500 or more	12.00%	12.00%	12.00%	12.00%
MONTHLY INCOME SAVING				
For investments of £10,000 or more	12.25%	12.25%	12.25%	12.25%
For investments of £5,000 or more	12.00%	12.00%	12.00%	12.00%
For investments of £2,500 or more	11.75%	11.75%	11.75%	11.75%
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For investments of £5,000 or more	11.25%	11.25%	11.25%	11.25%
For investments of £2,500 or more	11.00%	11.00%	11.00%	11.00%
REGULAR SAVINGS				
For investments of £10,000 or more	11.50%	11.50%	11.50%	11.50%
For investments of £5,000 or more	11.25%	11.25%	11.25%	11.25%
For investments of £2,500 or more	11.00%	11.00%	11.00%	11.00%
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For investments of £2,500 or more	12.00%	12.00%	12.00%	12.00%
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